The Courier

THE BAROQUE

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A time to live...

The candomblé cult

Modern Brazil has been shaped by a process of racial and cultural intermingling which began during the period when forms of baroque art and architecture imported from Portugal were being adapted to the Brazilian environment. Black slaves transported from Africa were compelled to accept the Catholic faith, but preserved in modified form many of their ancestral beliefs and rituals. Some of the syncretic cults and rituals which arose from this fusion of cultures still hold sway in parts of Brazil. One of them is practised by members of the candomblé *ritual groups which first appeared in the 19th century in the city of Salvador, formerly São Salvador de Bahia de Todos os Santos, the capital of Afro-Brazilian culture. Above, four women members of a* candomblé *group at prayer before an altar in the lavishly gilded baroque church of São Domingo, in Salvador.*

Editorial

The baroque age in western Europe began sometime around 1600 and lasted until the mid-eighteenth century. It saw the flowering of a culture which, although it developed mainly in the Latin countries, spread to eastern Europe and above all took root on a grand scale in the Spanish and Portuguese colonies of South America, where an important hybrid form of baroque art emerged.

Baroque culture was the product of an age marked by profound economic and social crisis during which the pomp and ceremony associated with absolute monarchies and the Counter-Reformation could not conceal signs of depression in a Europe whose religious beliefs had been shaken by the Lutheran Reformation and by the first conquests of rationalism and modern science.

This acute sense of crisis, which would last until its extinction a century and a half later by the optimistic humanism of the Enlightenment, shaped many of the characteristic features of baroque art and literature: disenchantment, a sense of the illusory nature of the world of appearances, a theatrical conception of life, an acute awareness of passing time and of the certainty and finality of death, a taste for artifice and display, and, in art, for exaggerated, "expressionist" forms. But paradoxically enough, such depressive tendencies triggered off an explosion of sensuality and whetted an appetite for life and enjoyment which is revealed in the dazzling exuberance of the baroque visual arts and the prodigious universe of sound which is baroque music.

The baroque art and culture of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Europe also flourished in the Spanish and Portuguese colonies of America, where in time it underwent a transformation. Models imported from the Iberian peninsula were gradually adapted, subtly modified and given an original imprint as the process of ethnic and cultural intermingling overflowed into art. Latin American baroque would eventually find full expression in such magnificent creations of folk art as the church of Tonantzintla in Mexico, the "Sistine Chapel" of colonial art.

Some critics consider that the Baroque is not only a European and Ibero-American phenomenon but a "cultural constant" which recurs throughout the history of art. It is undeniable that outside Europe and the Americas, in such different cultural regions as Persia, China, Japan and Kampuchea, forms of expression closely related to baroque sensibility have appeared. It is also significant that a century like our own, a century of crises, upheavals and vacillating beliefs, should feel an affinity with certain seventeenth-century forms of art and culture. Perhaps it is justifiable, then, to consider the Baroque as a category of aesthetic sensibility and thus recognize its global dimension.

This number of the *Unesco Courier* does not claim to paint a complete picture of the immense world of the Baroque. What we have tried to do is to show some of its most characteristic manifestations and some of its finest achievements.

Editor-in-chief: Edouard Glissant

September 1987

40th year

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Cover: *The Glorification of Urban VIII's Pontificate* (1633-1639) painted by Pietro da Cortona on the ceiling of the main hall of the Palazzo Barberini in Rome (see article page 30 and colour pages).

Photo © SCALA, Editions Mazenod, Paris

Back cover: detail of mouldings on the ceiling of the church of Santa María Tonantzintla (c. 1700), near Puebla, Mexico (see article page 34).

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An age of exuberance, drama and disenchantment

BY PETER SKRINE

WHAT does *Baroque* mean? There are many overlapping definitions. To some scholars and art historians who have written well about it, *Baroque* signifies a mode of European painting, a style of architecture, a cultural phenomenon which found its most effective expression in the fine arts and the applied arts. To them, and rightly so, it is above all something visual.

But to many other scholars and literary historians, *Baroque* means an attitude to life which arose out of that great revival of cultural energy and aesthetic values known as the Renaissance, from which it was separated by the deep spiritual and religious crises which are associated with the Protestant Reformation.

As a result, baroque literature, which flowered in the 1620s and 1630s and reached its zenith around 1660, is characterized by sharp contrasts and antitheses: its authors delight in the sensual beauty of things and are fond of describing them in opulent, even flowery, detail, but they are also capable of brooding darkly on the deeper mysteries of life and eternity. Its playwrights extol heroic valour and steadfastness, but enjoy the collision between such virtues and the passions of the heart, which they evoke with extraordinary vigour, eloquence and verve. These qualities may be seen in the plays of the German baroque poet Casper von Lohenstein (1635-1683) and even in those of his French contemporary Jean Racine (1639-1699).

The baroque attitude to life found eloquent expression in literature and music as well as in architecture and painting. In all these arts it manifests itself most obviously in a dynamic relationship between underlying control of form, a strong desire to create a sense of movement, and a delight in ornamental detail. In countries where it has left strong and indelible traces, there is a natural tendency to rate it highly and to describe the finest products of seventeenth-century art and literature as *baroque* without further definition. This is often the case in Italy, Spain and the Latin-American countries, and in Austria, the Federal Republic of Germany, the German Democratic Republic, and Czechoslovakia.

In England and France, however, there is a deeply ingrained and understandable reluctance to accept the term. Indeed, all countries with strong Protestant Christian traditions, like England and the United States, tend to regard the Baroque as a typically Roman Catholic phenomenon, as something alien to their own culture. The case of France, however, reveals how complex the situation really is, for there the Baroque coincided with what the French are justly proud of calling their "classical age", which rightly or wrongly they see as its antithesis.

The Baroque developed at different speeds and different levels of intensity in different places. Some areas of art and literature might be more affected by it than others and sometimes, too, it could coalesce more or less naturally with indigenous traditions and ways of being. Italy, already the home of the Renaissance, played a large part in its emergence and its radiation to other parts of Europe. But should we locate its sources there alone? There are also valid arguments for seeing the Baroque as the expression of a state of mind and an attitude to the world which arose simultaneously in many different parts of Europe and which even had counterparts in other, more distant places such as the Iran of Shah Abbas (1587-1629), the China of the early Ch'ing Dynasty and the Japan of the great dramatist Chikamatsu (1653-1725).

But let us stay in Christian Western Europe. There two significant factors were perhaps more responsible than any others for the rise of the Baroque. One was the emergent concept of absolute monarchy, the other was the popularity of play-acting and theatre. Europe had not witnessed these things on such a scale since the emperors and vast amphitheatres of the ancient Roman Empire, one thousand years before. When absolutism and the theatre came together, and powerful seventeenth-century sovereigns commanded that splendid performances of plays be given in their magnificent new palaces, the Baroque was more strikingly in evidence than anywhere else—except in the ceremonies and imposing buildings of the Roman Catholic church. The Church's claim to universal spiritual authority and its highly-developed sense of occasion made it a generous patron of baroque artists, musicians and poets. It would be impossible to overstress the importance of royal prestige, spiritual values and dramatic display in Europe's baroque achievement.

A pervasive image captures the baroque age's view of the human condition and its love of the theatrical: the world as a stage. To the English speaker this image recalls Shakespeare because it occurs in his comedy *As You Like It*. But the same notion can be found in all the major literatures of Europe. The rich seaport of Amsterdam opened its municipal playhouse in 1638; over its door could be read a couplet by the great Dutch poet of the age, Vondel, which proclaimed "The world's a stage: each plays his role and gets his just reward".

Meanwhile in Holland's political and

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Photo © Richard Bin, Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris

The baroque period has been called "the golden age of the clock-maker's art", and an acute awareness of time slipping by is a recurrent theme in great works of contemporary literature such as Shakespeare's plays and the sonnets of the Spanish poet Francisco Quevedo. Above, **L'habit d'horlogère,** *an early 18th-century engraving showing a pendulum clock, an invention of the baroque age.*

Baroque art is characterized by a sense of activity and movement which contrasts with the order and restraint of classicism. To escape from the rigidity of orderly rectangular areas inherited by the Renaissance from Greco-Roman Antiquity, baroque architects often used twisted columns, the most famous examples of which are those designed by the Italian architect, sculptor and painter Gian Lorenzo Bernini (1598-1680) for the bronze baldacchino or canopy (right) over the high altar in St. Peter's basilica, Rome. The dramatic 34-metre-high baldacchino was commissioned by Pope Urban VIII and built between 1624 and 1633 beneath the great dome designed by Michelangelo.

Photo © Cuchi White, Editions Mazenod, Paris

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The world's a stage

Photo Horace © Edimedia, Paris

"All the world's a stage", says a character in Shakespeare's comedy As You Like It, *and the Spanish dramatist Calderón de la Barca entitled one of his early works* El Gran Teatro del Mundo *(The Great Theatre of the World). Such theatrical images of the human condition pervade the baroque age, which saw an extraordinary flowering of the dramatic arts, the magnificence of Roman Catholic Church ceremonies and the pomp of absolute monarchies. In addition to Shakespeare and Calderón, other great 17th-century dramatists of western Europe were Corneille, Racine and Molière in France, and Lope de Vega in Spain. Baroque stage sets were designed, and new forms of theatre machinery were developed for the staging of spectacular productions. Above, decor by the Italian stage designer Giacomo Torelli for a production of Corneille's musical tragedy* Andromède. *Left, a scene from a performance of Calderón's play* La vida es sueño *(Life is a Dream) at a French drama festival.*

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

commercial rival, Spain, Vondel's contemporary Calderón de la Barca was writing his famous masterpiece *El Gran Teatro del Mundo*, the play which gives the image of the world as a stage its supreme baroque interpretation: for here God Almighty is himself the author of the play which is produced on the stage of our human world after the curtain of chaos has risen. This play is acted extempore by the various men and women to whom its parts are given: ambitious king and beautiful woman, overworked peasant and bullied beggar, wise religious person and complacent rich man, they may be stereotypes, yet they are caught up so realistically in the act of living that they seem to come to life before our very eyes. Of course their performances turn out less well than God had hoped, and divine Grace, the prompter, has a very difficult task with such all-too-human actors. But fortunately God is also an indulgent author and spectator. The climax of Calderón's play, like the massive Spanish altarpieces of the period, confronts its spectators with the timeless message central to the Christian faith: the sacrifice of Christ and mankind's redemption as seen through the eyes of a post-Reformation Spanish Roman Catholic poet with a truly baroque imagination.

Baroque men and women were always conscious that the eyes of God and the world were upon them. But this did not lead to self-consciousness in the modern post-Romantic sense. Instead it fostered a sense of self-esteem and an awareness of the importance of cutting a figure in the world, of projecting an image as meaningful as those conveyed by the painting, sculpture and drama of the period. Maybe the painted portraits of the Baroque, like its stage productions and the descriptive passages in its profuse pastoral and courtly romances, did not seem as unrealistic to their contemporaries as they perhaps now seem to us.

Like painted portraits, baroque palaces reflect their builders' views of themselves. They are panegyrics in stone, and their purpose was to extol the virtues and victories of those who lived in them. In order to laud their names and magnify their deeds, baroque princes also required the services of writers, who were usually ready to place their talents at the disposal of their patrons and to praise them in fulsome odes, lighthearted wedding poems and sonorous epitaphs, all written to order. Financial reasons certainly had a part to play in this, but one senses the presence of profounder and more compelling motives. There are times when the balance between meaning and hollow bombast, triumph and despair, is so finely caught that the desire of baroque artists to exalt great men and their achievements can strike us as a heroic show of defiance and a bold attempt to drown their sense of insecurity.

A note of disenchantment was present in the Baroque right from the start. Its fondness for play-acting and for the metaphor of the stage reveals its deep-seated awareness that appearances are all illusion. Its flamboyant praise of great men and heroes—as in the plays of the French Corneille, the English Dryden and the German Gryphius—may just have been an attempt to postpone the oblivion that must finally engulf all things, even the greatest. Amidst all the colour, glitter and extrovert joy of living so characteristic of the baroque period, there was a darker and more searching side to its literature. "Chaque instant de la vie est un pas vers la mort," the Roman emperor Titus realizes in the last act of Corneille's late tragedy *Tite et Bérénice* (1670).

But when the play is over, what then? The people who inhabited the baroque world could never entirely forget that life is precarious and short indeed in comparison to the certainty and finality of death: "Death, in itself, is nothing; but we fear to be we know not what, we know not where," says the Indian hero of John Dryden's heroic play *Aureng-Zebe* (1675).

War, famine and plague were common occurrences for people then: for instance the Thirty Years War devastated the German-speaking areas of Europe between 1618 and 1648, and plague ravaged London and many other cities in 1665. A few years later, Hans Jakob Christopher von Grimmelshausen, a German soldier who had served in that war, produced one of the masterpieces of baroque prose fiction, a novel called *Simplicissimus*, which has been translated into many languages and which expresses its author's first-hand experience of prosperity and adversity in a fascinating fusion of narrative forms and styles ranging from the picaresque tradition of the Spanish satirical novel of low life to the fashionable courtly romance in which the hero's adventures finally turn out to have an underlying design and purpose.

In various parts of Europe men were gazing heavenward at the mysteries of a universe which was growing daily vaster thanks to the newly invented telescope, and trying to comprehend the harmonies which they knew must underlie it. Kepler's scientific emphasis on elliptical motion, and his observation that the heavenly bodies can form constant patterns despite the fact that they are never static, have many features in common with the restless movement, the elliptical shapes and the formal designs which underlie all baroque architecture, art and literature. The recognition of fundamental laws and transcendental order made it possible for them to accept that this brief and fragile life of ours, this vale of tears, is a mere illusion, yet prevented them from lapsing into dark despair at the inevitable fact of mortality. Even in the delightful innocent pastoral world of Arcadia, peopled with pretty nymphs and love-lorn shepherds, which baroque writers never tired of evoking, death could never be entirely ruled out.

But it was not of death, perhaps, that baroque writers most complained, but of Time, under the fatal shadow of whose wings all things decay and wither. The century which saw the invention of the pendulum clock and the balance-spring mechanism in watches was growing more and more aware of the passing of time—of time measured not just in seasons, months and days, but in hours, minutes and even seconds. The pressure which all modern people know came as something of a shock to the seventeenth century. To own an hour-glass or pocket-watch was a first step towards the acute consciousness of fleeting time which quickly became a major preoccupation of the period. It became a frequent theme for poets, and in some more thoughtful writers it was to engender a feeling of metaphysical dread.

But the acute awareness of rapacious time forever slipping by and taking with it all the things we love and value most; the universal sense of the vanity of all earthly things which poets and preachers reiterated in all the cultural languages of Europe; the tomb always waiting just around the corner as a reminder that flesh is mortal and that man is dust: all this paradoxically led to an extraordinary capacity for living and enjoying life. This paradox is to be found at the heart of countless baroque poems in which poets encouraged men and women to gather rosebuds while the summer lasted, to love one another and to be in love, and to appreciate the colourful masquerade of life. Their knowledge that it would all end like a dream served to put life in perspective and to enhance its value for those on whom fortune smiled. Famous examples are to be found in all the literatures of Europe: in John Donne and Herrick, in the French poet Ronsard's admirers Hooft and Opitz in the Netherlands and Germany, and in the complex and

Pain and suffering are frequently portrayed in religious drama, painting and above all sculpture of the baroque age. Spanish baroque religious carvings are particularly notable for their sometimes macabre depictions of Christ, the Virgin Mary and other figures of the Passion story in paroxysms of grief. Below, the severed head of St. John the Baptist (c. 1625) by the Cordoban sculptor Juan de Mesa (Seville cathedral).

Photo © Bulloz, Paris

Photo © Mas, Barcelona

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The works of Shakespeare (left), while not strictly speaking baroque, often reflect the spirit of the age in their explosive violence and in their preoccupation with appearance and reality and with dramatic illusion. The Spanish poet Luis de Góngora y Argote (centre) was a master of a highly ornamental, labyrinthine style which became known as "gongorism". Like its Italian equivalent "marinismo" (named after the Italian Giambattista Marino), it echoed contemporary trends in the plastic arts. Engraving, bottom left, is the frontispiece illustration of a 17th-century edition of Simplicissimus, *a masterwork of baroque prose by the German writer Grimmelshausen.*

sophisticated verse of Marino in Italy and Góngora in Spain.

Despite its emphasis on the transience of all earthly things, baroque culture produced works of literature which can attain unparalleled vitality and intensity. But this only becomes fully evident if one can understand the meaning of the words in which baroque poems, plays and novels are written—and sometimes their hidden meanings, too! Otherwise, the rich interplay of images, metaphors and conceits which baroque writers delighted in inventing may sometimes seem to readers today to amount to nonsense.

Only in performance can baroque plays and operas capture our whole attention and enthral us with their sights and sounds, their appeal to ear and eye, the mind and the imagination. Yet performances are rare, and most of them have to take place in the imaginations of sympathetic readers or of listeners to recordings. Only when we are actually standing in the baroque churches and palaces which can be found all over Western Europe and in many of its former overseas colonial possessions can we come to appreciate the powerful claims that the Baroque makes on us.

Modern readers and spectators may think that much is fake: they may find it as hard to relate to the far-fetched metaphors and florid sentiments expressed by baroque love poets as to the exaggerated poses of carved and painted statues. But sometimes, even now, we can still register the impact of a love sonnet or a funerary ode, a heroic tragedy or a deftly turned comedy, and marvel at the audacity with which these artists three centuries ago reflected a world not yet deprived of its sense of delight and wonder and gave expression to Europe's last comprehensive vision of a universe not yet bereft of its divinity. ■

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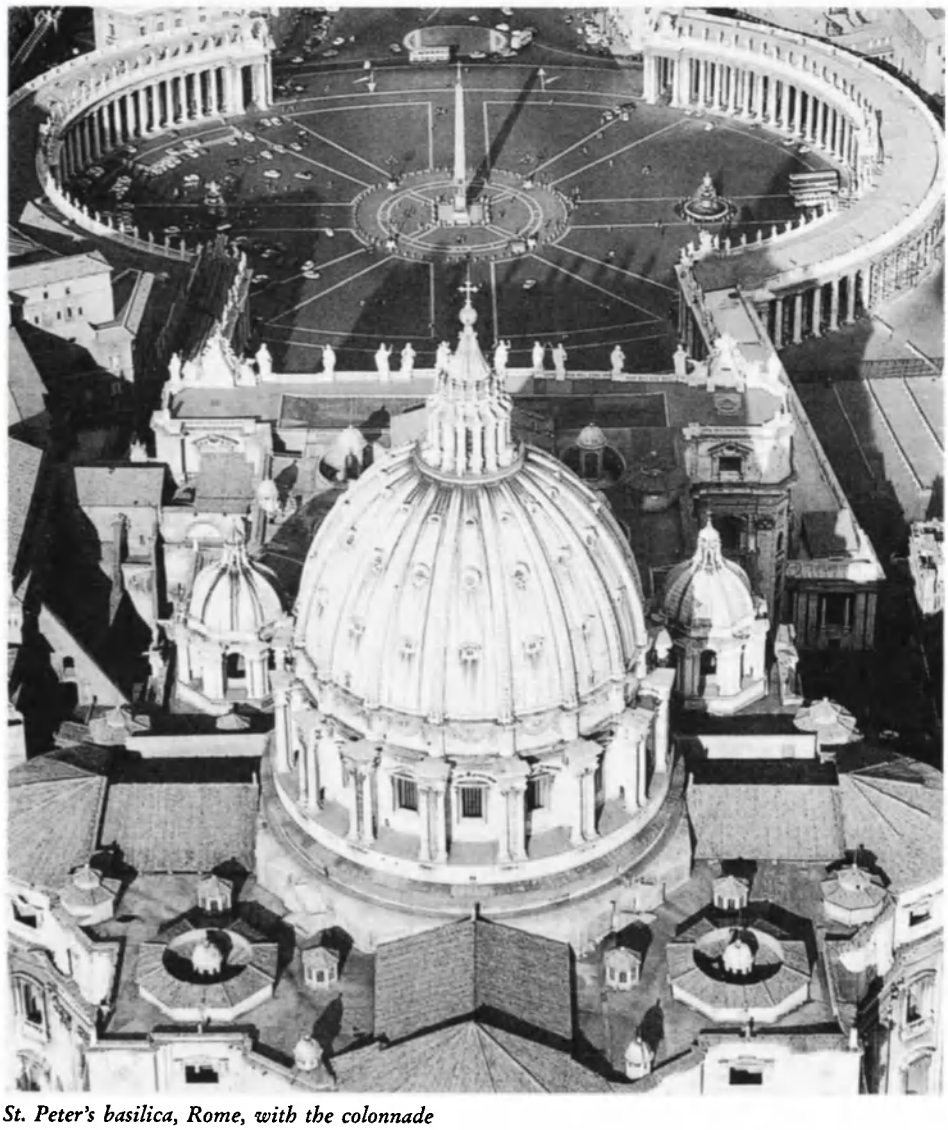
Rubens the magnificent

While baroque art did not take root in the northern Netherlands, it blossomed in the south (what is now Belgium) above all in 17th-century painting. Baroque art is at its most luminous and sensual in the work of Peter Paul Rubens, which celebrates life in all its forms. Through Rubens, who knew Italy well and paid a long visit to Spain, Antwerp became a centre of the arts from which a taste for baroque painting spread throughout Europe. Right, The Last Judgment *(1616), a work by Rubens which is today preserved in Munich. Compared with the work which inspired it, Michelangelo's* Last Judgment *in the Sistine Chapel, Rubens' painting appears typically baroque by virtue of the exaggerated dynamism of its figures and the violent effects of contrast.*

Photo © Bulloz. Paris

Three great domes

BY GIULIO CARLO ARGAN



Photos © Almasy, Paris

St. Peter's basilica, Rome, with the colonnade designed by Bernini flanking the square

St. Paul's cathedral, London

The church of St. Louis des Invalides, Paris

IF Roman Baroque is the representation of a religious and political ideal, French Baroque is the representation of an exclusively political ideal, and English Baroque that of a civic and social ideal. The diversity of the ideological content of French, English and Italian Baroque is strikingly illustrated by a comparison between the three famous domes of St. Peter's in Rome, the church of St. Louis des Invalides in Paris, and St. Paul's cathedral in London. The first is clearly the archetype. In the thinking of its architect, Michelangelo, later followed and given a wide allegorical sweep by Bernini in his conception of the colonnade flanking St. Peter's Square, the dome was to be identified with the body of the church, to be the image of the head of Christianity and of the celestial vault which ideally covers the whole *ecumene* (the world). In Bernini's design, the wings of the colonnade are like the arms of a figure whose head is the dome.

Resting on a double drum, Jules Hardouin Mansart's dome in Paris rises in sovereign isolation above a flat façade divided by columns into geometrical panels: its mass and its ornate decoration dominate the whole building, supported on a perfect architectural arrangement just as the sovereign power was supported by the hierarchical order of the State of which it was the summit.

Christopher Wren's dome in London is related, through the Italian architect Sebastiano Serlio, to Donato Bramante's original plan for St. Peter's. It rests on a vast edifice with which it is so little articulated that it requires a cylindrical base. It is like a building incorporated into another building and only distinguished from it by the stylized elegance of the drum and the curvature of the dome. This dome is more of a symbol than an image of power; and its function is purely formal, like that of the sovereign in the English political structure of the late seventeenth century. Without going so far as to see a deliberate political allegory, it must be remembered that the form of a dome traditionally symbolizes authority or power and that such a political intention is surely at the origin of Michelangelo's dome and inspired the domes of Mansart and Wren. ■

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The musical offering

BY ALBERTO BASSO

***Opera, one of the most characteristic forms of baroque musical expression, originated in Italy with* Orfeo, L'incoronazione di Poppea *and other landmark works by Claudio Monteverdi. The first significant French operas were written by the Italian-born musician Jean-Baptiste Lully, whose influence extended throughout Europe. Above, "The Fall of Phaethon", a stage design by Jean Bérain the Elder for Lully's musical drama* Phaéton.**

IN music, the term *baroque* has been used to describe a certain concept of art, a stylistic idiom, but also a method of composition built on a specific component, the *basso continuo*. Described in simple terms, such compositions consist of a melodic line and a continuous accompaniment in a set form. This type of composition is quite different from that of the preceding period, when the emphasis was placed on polyphony, that is, music in which there are several parts of equal importance.

The starting point of the new epoch is usually taken as the year 1600, when the Italian *melodramma* (opera) came into being, and its end is generally considered to have come with the death of Johann Sebastian Bach in 1750. The history of music underwent extraordinary changes in this century and a half during which forms that were to exist for hundreds of years were "invented", and the structure of harmony was established on foundations that lasted into much later times.

As the Renaissance drew to a close, one outstanding event dominated the musical world, and later had a far-reaching effect on the development of style in literature, in the pictorial arts, in architecture and even in social life. This was the rise of opera, the logical evolution of the revival of the art of theatre which was ushered in by the Italian courts and was the outcome of the Renaissance desire to recreate classical Antiquity

and actualize Hellenistic civilization. Opera originated in Florence, but acquired various characteristics of style and expression in Rome, Venice and Naples. It was the most effective vehicle of the new musical culture in Italy, and rapidly won recognition in other countries, where it almost always retained its original character, except in France where it developed independently and was known as *tragédie lyrique*.

Claudio Monteverdi, Luigi Rossi and Francesco Cavalli were the leading exponents of this new genre in the early seventeenth century, while later Jean-Baptiste Lully (the Florentine who was the father of French opera) and Alessandro Scarlatti came to the fore as creators of two different kinds of musical theatre that persisted throughout almost the whole of the eighteenth century.

The operatic style that prevailed was that of Scarlatti, which was taken as a model even by German masters such as Handel and Hasse. Opera was originally a "serious" genre, but later it assumed a comic form as well, and became either a theatrical production in its own right or a kind of humorous interlude performed between the acts of a larger production (as in the case of the *intermezzo*, the undisputed master of which was the Italian composer Giovanni Battista Pergolesi). In other countries opera gave rise to entertainments in which spoken dialogue and singing were combined (the English masque, the Spanish *zarzuela*, the French *opéra-comique*, the German *Singspiel*), which supplanted the traditional Italian pattern of recitative and aria.

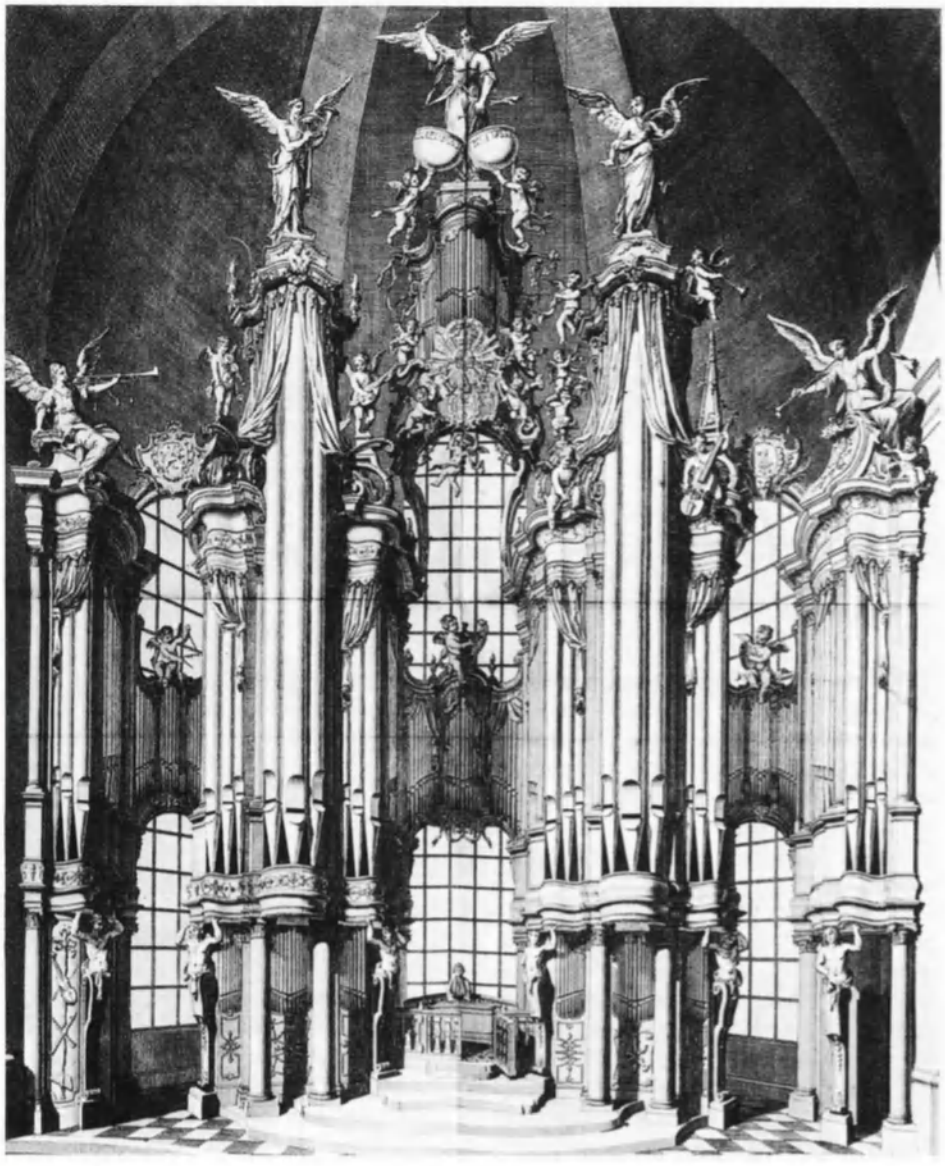
This same pattern also dominated other forms of vocal music, above all the oratorio, the authentic expression of the devotional spirit of the Counter-Reformation which has all the characteristics of a spiritual opera without scenery. At least, this is the case with the most typical, vernacular form of oratorio, such as the splendid works of Stradella and Alessandro Scarlatti, for those written in Latin (mainly associated with Carissimi) were more ecclesiastical in spirit.

Unlike oratorios, which usually relate biblical events or the lives of the saints, Passion music centres on the death of Christ and often uses the words of the Gospels. The finest examples are the Passions of Bach, but other great settings were written by Heinrich Schütz and later by Handel (who was also a master of the oratorio) and by Georg Philipp Telemann.

Opera in miniature, the chamber cantata is a typical expression of Italian vocal music. The thousands of examples of this genre suggest that its popularity exceeded even that of the madrigal in the sixteenth century. One or two recitatives and arias were enough to create a cantata, and the only instrument required, as a rule, was a harpsichord to provide the accompaniment. From Carissimi to Rossi, from Cesti to Stradella, from Pasquini to Scarlatti and Handel, the cantata remained in vogue throughout the baroque period, even in French musical circles, which constantly resisted the Italian style. Indeed, the opposition between Italian style and French taste was one of the most persistent and pervasive features of the baroque era.

As for sacred music intended for use in the liturgy, masses and motets continued to be composed, although at a rather sluggish rate. The great masters of sacred music belonged to the Roman and Venetian schools (Benevoli, Bernabei, Caldara, Gasparini, Legrenzi) and then the Neapolitan school (Scarlatti, Durante, Leo), later being drawn from the Germanic countries, (Biber, Kerll and Fux) and France (Charpentier, Lalande and Couperin). In England, remarkable services and anthems were written for the Anglican Church by composers who were also noted for their secular music, such as Gibbons, Tomkins, Lawes, Blow, and above all Purcell, who inspired even Handel.

But it was in the Protestant Church music



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Developed to a high degree of technical perfection, the harpsichord and the organ were, with the violin, the favourite instruments of baroque composers. In the work of Girolamo Frescobaldi in Italy and Johann Sebastian Bach in Germany, organ music reached its peak, while in France François Couperin "the Great" won fame as the composer of music for the harpsichord. Eighteenth-century engraving, left, shows the decoration of the organ in Weingarthen Abbey in Swabia (Fed. Rep. of Germany) built by Gabler in 1750. Below, "A Lady Playing a Spinet", an engraving by Bonnart (c. 1685). An early keyboard instrument of the harpsichord family, the spinet was widely played in the 16th and 17th centuries, especially in England.

From Monteverdi to Bach

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Shown above are portraits of some of the great composers who contributed to the flowering of baroque music, which began with Monteverdi in Italy at the beginning of the 17th century and ended in the first half of the 18th century with Bach. 1. Claudio Monteverdi (1567-1643), composer of operas, madrigals and sacred music, whose work had a seminal influence on modern music. 2. François Couperin (1668-1733), the French master of the harpsichord, as depicted in an anonymous portrait at the Palace of Versailles. 3. Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750), one of the greatest musical geniuses of all time, (engraving after a painting by Gebel). 4. George Frederick Handel (1685-1759), another great German composer, who spent much of his life in England (engraving after a painting by G.F. Schmidt). 5. The Italian composer Alessandro Scarlatti (1660-1725). His son Domenico, a harpsichord virtuoso, lived for many years at the Spanish court, and taught Antonio Soler, the leading Spanish baroque composer. 6. Henry Purcell (1659-1695), the English composer who in his short life wrote some of the finest lyrical music of the age.

1. Photo © Cournat © Rapho, Paris
2. Photo © Ciccione-Bulloz, Paris
3. Photo © Bulloz, Paris. Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris
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6. Photo © Edimedia, Paris. British Museum, London

which sprang from the Lutheran Reformation that the baroque period revealed a new sensibility. The sacred cantata, more often called a sacred concerto or simply a concerto (as if to emphasize that it was the descendant of the Italian *concerto ecclesiastico*, a combination of voices and instruments), came to play an essential role in worship, and inspired a constant creative effort from composers. The words were taken from the Scriptures, often from the readings prescribed by the liturgical calendar for feast-days, and the music took over that extraordinary vehicle of artistic and religious feeling, the chorale.

Schein, Scheidt and Schütz (the three great Ss of the history of German music) laid the foundations of an edifice that was to include composers such as Buxtehude, Pachelbel, Tunder, Weckmann, Böhm, Theile, and above all Bach and Telemann (the latter wrote almost 1,600 liturgical cantatas). Bach, however, was the great exponent of the religious cantata. (He is thought to have written some 300, a third of which are lost.) His works, which span the whole baroque period, constitute an unrivalled repertory of the vocal and instrumental techniques used to express the emotions aroused by sacred texts and religious festivals.

Some of the greatest works of instrumental music, whether for a solo instrument or an ensemble, are associated with the baroque period. Pride of place went to keyboard instruments (harpsichord, spinet, virginals, clavichord and organ), with a repertoire that was often interchangeable. The work of the Italian school of organists reached its peak with Girolamo Frescobaldi, whose organ music and style influenced the whole of Europe. One of his most distinguished pupils, Johann Jakob Froberger, spread throughout the Germanic countries a message that was heard above all by the masters of the southern school, whose greatest figure was Pachelbel. The northern school, on the other hand, was more vigorous and produced more illustrious figures, notably Buxtehude. It claimed as its progenitor a Dutch master, Sweelinck.

Toccatas, fantasias, preludes, capriccios, ricercars and fugues proliferate in the keyboard music of the time. Dance rhythms were adapted into suites incorporating stylistic, metrical and dynamic variation. The Lutheran liturgy gave scope for the development of another genre, the choral prelude for organ, which extended the range of that instrument by providing it with a repertoire of incomparable splendour, which will forever be associated with the name of Bach.

Among the illustrious names linked with the harpsichord are those of Frescobaldi and Michelangelo Rossi, and later Pasquini, Alessandro Scarlatti and his son Domenico, Couperin and Rameau, Bach and Handel. But the harpsichord was also used to accompany instruments on which the melody was played, especially the violin, the repertoire for which culminates in the sonata and the concerto, the two great ideal forms of the baroque period, whether composed as church music or as chamber music. Later, the development of the concerto followed two paths: that of the *concerto grosso* (in which a group of solo instruments is heard in contradistinction to the whole orchestra, the *tutti*), and that of the *concerto solo* (in which a single instrument accomplishes impressive feats of virtuosity).

Arcangelo Corelli was the forerunner of generations of violinists, but with him were the greatest exponents of Italian eighteenth-century instrumental music—Vivaldi, Albinoni, Geminiani, Locatelli, Tartini, Torelli, Marcello. Hundreds of works for solo instruments or groups are evidence of an incomparable vitality which was felt in every country in Europe, for their composers bore the Italian style far beyond the borders of Italy.

Meanwhile, new musical forms were being developed. The symphony and overture vied with each other in a field teeming with ideas, and compositions gradually became increasingly complex and more heavily orchestrated. The basso continuo acquired a personality of its own, as several themes were introduced into the fabric of the music, which was composed in accordance with dialectical principles. From then on the rich, mannered baroque style began to give way to the elegant and graceful *style galant*. ■

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Photo Christian Sappa © CEDRI, Paris

An art of gilt and pathos

BY JULIAN GALLEGO

Above, the monumental baroque façade known as the Obradoiro, *which was added to the romanesque cathedral of Santiago de Compostela (Spain) in the 18th century. Gothic and plateresque (Spanish Renaissance) elements are also found in the cathedral.*

IT should be said at the outset that religion played a fundamental role in the development of Spanish Baroque. We shall not go into the question of the meaning of the term *baroque*, still less consider whether, as the Spanish critic Eugenio d'Ors has claimed, it is a cultural constant, recurring throughout the history of art in different periods and forms, in alternation with classicism.

In his book *Principles of Art History*, the Swiss art historian Heinrich Wölfflin broadly defined "classical" and "baroque" as static and changing forms of art respectively. In another influential book, *Baroque, the Art of the Counter-Reformation*, by Werner Weisbach, the Baroque is seen as a passionate reaction against Renaissance paganism.

Some specialists have recently suggested that there is an intermediate style known as Mannerism, which did not commit the rhythmic and decorative excesses of the Baroque but did reject the balance of the Renaissance in an endeavour to achieve heightened emotional effects (the most renowned example of this style is perhaps Michelangelo's *Last Judgment*, in the Sistine Chapel, Rome). Some scholars consider that Mannerism is the true art of the Counter-Reformation, and the Spanish critic José Camón Aznar has suggested that the term "mannerist" should be replaced by "tridentine" (after the Council of Trent, which codified the principles of the Counter-Reformation).

The monastery of San Lorenzo del Escorial, one of the outstanding monuments of Spanish architecture, is an example of this style. It was built near Madrid between 1563 and 1584 on the orders of Philip II. Its architects were Juan Bautista de Toledo and Juan de Herrera, the latter of whom gave his name to the "herreran style". Characterized by austerity, clarity of line and volume, and an attachment to regular, geometrical forms, the style of the Escorial was to influence the development of Spanish architecture throughout most of the seventeenth century, and remained a model until it was supplanted in the eighteenth century by the highly ornamental "churrigueresque" style, which took its name from that of a family of architects, the Churrigueras.

Most ecclesiastical buildings in the Spanish baroque style were built to rectilinear plans until well into the eighteenth century, and innovations were confined to ornamentation. Many churches were built to a plan derived from that of Il Gesù in Rome, the mother church of the Society of Jesus, which had been founded by the Spaniard Ignatius Loyola. The plan of Il Gesù is cruciform, and there is a dome above the crossing of the transepts and the nave. On each side of the

nave there is a row of chapels. There are also examples of vast oblong churches, whose architectural sobriety contrasts with their abundant, showy decoration, in wood and plaster, sometimes stone and metal. Ironwork is rich and abundant, and the chapels usually have wrought-iron gates. The decoration of the upper part of the church may take the form of stalactite-like shapes and other ornamental relief carvings of the type described technically as "Grotesque". In some cases these are vestiges of the *mudéjar* style of Muslim Spain (al-Andalus) which lasted from the eighth century until the end of the fifteenth century.

The lower part of the walls is often covered with altarpieces in the form of a triumphal arch with richly decorated columns and pediments. The largest altarpiece, in the apse, is a monumental structure which reaches to the vaults and is usually entirely covered with gilt and polychrome painting. In the church of San Estéban in Salamanca is a massive altarpiece designed by José de Churriguera (1668-1725). It has six huge twisted "Solomonic" columns, modelled on a column in Rome which was supposed to have been part of Solomon's temple; this form became famous when Bernini used it for the baldacchino, or ornamental canopy, over St. Peter's tomb (see photo page 5). Supports of this kind (which sometimes support nothing) bring dynamism to porches, chapels and shrines, of which there are many remarkable examples in Andalusia. They display the influence of the new architecture from Latin America, for while Spanish models were dominant in Spain's American colonies, they were influenced by the taste and craftsmanship of the indigenous peoples (especially in Mexico and Peru) and gave rise to a colonial Baroque whose luxuriant ornamentation and colours in their turn influenced the Baroque of metropolitan Spain.

The great Spanish court architect was Pedro de Ribera (c. 1683-1742), whose work showed a pronounced taste for the theatrical. As supports he used "estipites", highly decorated pilasters of irregular shape, which had been introduced into Madrid architecture by José Ximénez Donoso (1628-1690). Thus, although the Bourbons succeeded the House of Austria as rulers of Spain, the classical baroque style of Versailles was not adopted at the Spanish court until the royal palace in the Alcazar (the style of which was more or less herreran) was destroyed by fire in 1734 and was replaced by the Palacio de Oriente, the work of the Italian architects Filippo Juvarra and Giovan Sacchetti, in which there is less typically baroque ornamentation. The outstanding example of this transition to classicism is the architect Ven-

Right, the Baptism of Christ *by El Greco (1541-1614), the great Cretan artist who settled in Toledo. Baroque sensibility is apparent in the dramatic upward movement and bold elongation of natural forms characteristic of El Greco's late works.*

Photo © Bulloz, Paris. Prado Museum, Madrid

tura Rodríguez (1717-1785), who redesigned the Paseo del Prado, which made Madrid one of the great European capitals.

In Andalusia, the vitality of the Baroque left its mark on churches, monasteries and convents, and palaces, in which fantasy and elegance are combined in the use of multi-coloured materials such as brick, various kinds of stone, glazed tiles, carved wood, forged iron-work, shutters and stucco. Of special interest are tall, decorated bell-towers such as that at Ecija, and elegant bell-gables, examples of which are found in Seville and Cadiz. Inside the highly decorated churches there is often a window at a certain height in the altarpiece, through which can be seen a high chapel or niche where a holy image is presented for worship. Most of the external decoration was in porches and cornices; walls were left as unadorned brick or stone, or were regularly whitewashed to offer a striking contrast with the deep blue of the sky.

In Spanish towns and cities a labyrinth of medieval streets often leads to magnificent church porches or to a *plaza mayor*, one of the great squares which, throughout the peninsula, are the focal point of civic life and festivities. The churrigueresque great square in Salamanca is a notable example. Some of these squares are veritable museums of different architectural periods and styles, brought together and unified by baroque urban planning. One example can be seen at Santiago de Compostela, where the cathedral, which was given the monumental baroque façade known as El Obradoiro by Fernando Casas y Novoa in the eighteenth century, is an extraordinary amalgam of romanesque, Gothic, plateresque and classical styles.

The monastery of San Lorenzo del Escorial, built near Madrid between 1563 and 1584 on the orders of Philip II, provided a model for much 17th-century Spanish architecture. In the next century the influence of its austere classicism gave way to the highly ornate baroque churrigueresque *style. Below, the Patio of the Kings, with the façade, a tower and the dome of the monastery church.*

Photo © Mas, Barcelona

Photo © RMN, Paris

The baroque period in Spanish painting came to an end with Juan de Valdés Leal (1622-1690), whose works are charged with tension and drama. Above, Valdés Leal's The Wedding at Canaan, *now in the Louvre Museum, Paris.*

Through the combined effect of sculpture and architecture, churches became sacred theatres opening on to the splendid processions that took place outside. Wood carving was the principal form of sculpture, together with clothed polychrome statues which were intended to create a lifelike effect. The seventeenth-century school of Valladolid, one of the masters of which was Gregorio Fernández, produced sober, naturalistic works, full of intense emotion. The people were thus helped to relive Christ's Passion and death in the Holy Week processions. The Andalusian school was more expansive and exuberant. Its polychromes are brighter, and are combined with rich materials. In Seville, Juan Martínez Montañés (1568-1649) and Juan de Mesa (1583-1627) were noted for the brilliant colours and expressive gestures of their works, and in Granada Alonso Cano (1601-1667), Pedro de Mena (1628-1688) and José de Mora (1642-1724) painted works of great poignancy. The subjects most frequently treated are scenes from the childhood and Passion of Christ and the motherhood and sorrow of the Virgin Mary.

The eighteenth century saw a trend towards greater movement and elegance and more brilliant colours, both in the decoration of wood (covered with gold leaf, which was covered in its turn with oil-painted embellishments), and in the clothing of statues with embroidered garments. To heighten the illusion that they were real and to intensify the sense of drama, statues were fitted out with eyes of crystal, artificial eyelashes, and hair. Pedro Roldán (1624-1700) and his daughter Luisa, "La Roldana" (1656-1704), introduced the new style to Seville, carving widely-admired statues such as that of the Virgin of Macarena. Smaller statues were executed in terra-cotta, a technique employed with great elegance by José Risueño of Granada (1665-1757). In Murcia, Francisco Salzillo (1707-1781), an artist of Neapolitan descent, was renowned both for his Nativity figures and for groups of elegant and expressive sculptures which could be carried in the Easter procession.

The baroque period is the Golden Age of Spanish painting. The Andalusian school, which was naturalistic in the Italian style, emerged at the beginning of the seventeenth century with Pacheco and Herrera, and filled the churches with huge canvasses. The successors of El Greco (1541-1614) worked in Toledo. They did not reach the ecstatic mannerist heights of the Cretan master, whose last works, in their depiction of vertiginous upward movement, verged on the Baroque. Francisco de Zurbarán (1598-1664), from Extremadura, painted pictures for altars and cloisters that were imposing in their archaic sobriety, their tactile and almost architectural effects, and their pious gravity.

Italian influence can be seen in the painters of the Valencian school, who were in constant contact by sea with Naples. Outstanding among them are Francisco Ribalta (1551-1628) and especially José de Ribera, known as "el Españoleto" (1591-1652), who, though he went to live in Naples and died there, influenced painters all over Spain by the powerful realism and beautiful colours that were the hallmark of his work. He sent his striking paintings of saints and martyrs back to Spain. His example was followed in the next generation by a pupil of Pacheco, Diego Velázquez (1599-1660), who became

painter to King Philip IV. In paintings such as "The Maids of Honour" and "The Spinners", he displayed a technical skill and a conception of atmosphere and light that were completely new and difficult to match, although his successors—Mazo, Carreño, Rizi and Claudio Coello—are worthy representatives of the School of Madrid which he founded. The artist who most nearly approached him was his friend the sculptor Alonso Cano, who was also an excellent painter and architect. Both these baroque painters shunned exaggerated attitudes and dynamic movement in favour of serene, classical perfection, although there is no lack of energy in the play of light and the boldness of the brushwork.

Two Andalusian artists of genius brought to an end the great period of Spanish baroque painting: Bartolomé Esteban Murillo (1617-1682) in Seville, and Juan de Valdés Leal (1622-1690) in Córdoba. These men were near-contemporaries but differed totally in their approach. Murillo had a natural grace that had a wide appeal. He wanted to make the sacred relevant to his own day; and he had exceptional technical powers, although his works convey an impression of simplicity. This was the antithesis of the tensions, gesticulations, and exaggerated movements of Valdés Leal, which could, however, lead to outstanding results in such paintings as *The Chariot of Elias*, in the monastery of the Carmelitas Calzados at Córdoba, a work in which he approaches the Romanticism of Delacroix. ■

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Photo © Mas, Barcelona

The last phase of Spanish baroque architecture, known as churrigueresque, is characterized by the use of spiralling forms and ornamentation of a lavishness only surpassed in Latin America. The huge altarpiece by José de Churriguera in the Dominican church of San Estéban, Salamanca (above), is typical of this ornamental style.

Photo S. Marmounier © CEDRI, Paris

Baroque polychrome sculptures of scenes from Christ's Passion and Crucifixion are found in many Spanish churches. During Holy Week processions they are carried through the streets. Left, a group of Passion sculptures from Zamora, a city northwest of Madrid.

Baroque as a world philosophy

BY EDOUARD GLISSANT

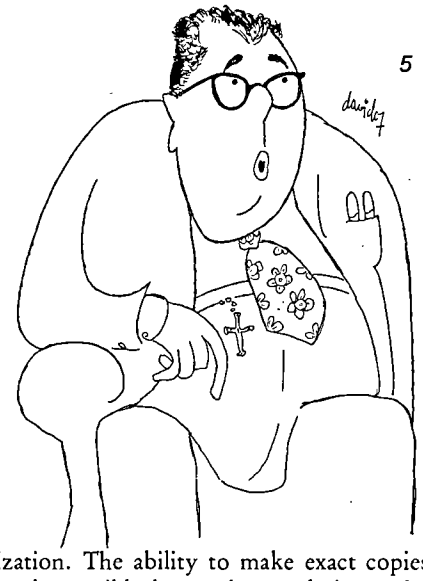

Illustration © David, Havana, 1967

THE baroque style made its appearance in the West at the very moment that a certain idea of Nature—that it was homogeneous, harmonious and comprehensible—was gaining ground. Rationalism refined this concept which fitted in well with its growing ambition to dominate reality. It seemed, moreover, that Nature could be artificially reproduced, imitation of reality going hand in hand with knowledge of it.

Imitation of Nature as an objective assumes that, underlying outward appearance and inherent in it, there is a "profundity", an unassailable truth, artistic representations of which approximate more closely as they systematize their imitation of reality and discover its rules. The revolution represented by the introduction of perspective during the *quattrocento* can thus, perhaps, be seen as part of the search for this profundity.

It was against this current that the baroque "diversion" began to make itself felt. Baroque art was a reaction against the rationalist claim to penetrate the mysteries of the known in one single, incisive, uniform movement. The stone with which baroque art disturbed the rationalist pool was an affirmation that knowledge is never fully acquired, a fact that gives it all its value. Thus the techniques of baroque art were to favour "breadth" to the detriment of "depth".

In its historical context, the baroque diversion thus presupposes a new heroic quality of knowledge, resolutely turning its back on the goal of attempting to epitomize the substance of the world in a series of representative (or imitative) harmonies. On the contrary, baroque art or style was to turn to contrast, to circumvolution, to proliferation, to everything that contradicted the *soi-disant* oneness of the known and the knower, to everything that exalted quantity repeated to infinity and totality eternally renewed.

In its historical setting, therefore, baroque art is a reaction against a natural order, naturally proffered as evidence. When the conception of Nature evolved, at the same time that the world was opening up to Western man and that science was bringing the splendid ordering of Nature into question, the thrust of baroque art was itself also to become generalized, ceasing to be no more than a reaction. Baroque art, the art of expansion, was itself materially to expand.

The first manifestation of this expansion was undoubtedly to be seen in Latin-American art, so close to Iberian and Flemish Baroque, yet so intimately interwoven with indigenous elements, daringly introduced into the baroque concert. These elements were no longer seen to enter as revolutionary disfigurements of reality, but as inputs of a novel kind. No longer simply the negation of a concept, baroque art has given its sanction to a new schema (soon to be a new concept) of Nature, to which it is attuned.

Cross-fertilization is the determinant of this evolution, and the pursuits of baroque art are at one with the dizzying adventure of cross-fertilization of cultures, styles and tongues. With the generalization of this cross-fertilization, the Baroque has finally achieved its "natural" condition. It announces to the world the growing contact between a diversity of "natures". It is in sympathy with this world movement and is no longer content to be merely a reaction against a philosophy or an aesthetic. It is the sum and result of all aesthetic theories, of all philosophies. In short, Baroque is neither an art nor a style, but a being-in-the-world.

The modern scientific view of reality coincides with and confirms this expansion of the Baroque. Science does, indeed, assert that reality cannot be defined in terms of outward appearances and that it has to be examined "in depth", but it also accepts that knowledge is never wholly acquired and that it would be absurd to claim that its essentials can be grasped at a single stroke. Science has entered the era of the uncertainty principle, retaining, nevertheless, a form of rationalism which henceforth abjures paralysing, mechanical, once-and-for-all dogmatism. Its conceptions of Nature are "expanding", becoming relative, problematical. It is moving, that is, in the selfsame direction towards which the Baroque tends.

Similarly, human nature is no longer thought of in terms of a clear-cut, universal model. The concept of being-in-the-world implies the sum total of *all* types of being-in-society. There is no unique, recognized model. All human cultures have had their classical periods, eras of dogmatic certainty from which they must all emerge together. In this sense the "profundities" revealed by science, psychology and sociology counter triumphantly the metaphysical "profundity" emphasized by Western classicism alone. Herein lies the very key to the universalization of the Baroque.

One might, then, sum up by saying that there has been a "naturalization" of the Baroque, not simply as an art form or style, but as a way of living out the diversity-unity of the world; that this naturalization takes the Baroque out of the limited context of Counter-Reformation flamboyance, of revolt against the constraints of a tradition, to give it a universal quality as the embodiment of "interrelating"; and that, in this sense, the Baroque of history foreshadowed, in astonishingly prophetic fashion, the upheavals that mark the world of today.

Finally, a recent characteristic of contemporary art, defined by Walter Benjamin as "technically reproducible art", seems to confirm this movement towards universalization. The ability to make exact copies, made possible by modern techniques, has changed the whole course of future development of the arts. Not only has the conception of Nature become relative, the notion of the metaphysical oneness of a masterpiece has been swept away. In the present state of diversity, not only does a work of art combine profundity with expansion, it is itself subject to a fundamental expansion which, thanks to increasingly perfected methods of reproduction, adds infinitely to its significance. ■

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Although the notion of the Baroque is primarily associated with a specific period in the cultural history of the Christian West, the 17th and 18th centuries, some writers have wondered whether it could not be applied in a far wider context to describe a surge of vitality, movement and emotional force of the kind which periodically causes an upheaval in the arts. The Spanish critic Eugenio d'Ors has suggested that the Baroque may be an essential component of intelligence and sensibility, a "stylistic constant" which recurs throughout history. Such a thesis could help to explain the affinities that can be observed between Western Baroque and other forms of artistic expression that have appeared at different periods in countries far distant from each other. 1. 13th-century Gate of Victory in the temple complex of Angkor Thom, Kampuchea. 2. Church of the Sagrada Familia *(Holy Family), Barcelona, by the Catalan architect Antonio Gaudí, begun in 1883 and never completed. 3. Tomb built for himself by Ferdinand Cheval, French postman and self-taught artist famed for the "Ideal Palace" he built (after seeing it in a dream) between 1879 and 1912 at Hauterives, Drôme, France. 4. Colourful carnival scene from Trinidad and Tobago (West Indies). 5. The Cuban poet and novelist José Lezama Lima (1910-1976) who, like many Latin American writers, considered himself a baroque author, and claimed affinities with the Spanish baroque poet Góngora.*

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Photo Andy Levin © Rapho, Paris

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Photo Unesco/C. Baugey

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Photo Wilhelm Braga © Rapho, Paris

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Sculpture, theatre of the sublime

BY FRANÇOIS SOUCHAL

The genius of Bernini, the supreme artist of baroque Catholicism and the man who made St. Peter's basilica the prestigious centre of the papacy in Rome, was expressed with the greatest intensity in his work as a sculptor. Above left, The Ecstasy of St. Theresa *(1644-1652) in the Cornaro chapel in the church of Santa Maria della Vittoria, Rome, a dramatic portrayal of the mystic rapture of a 16th-century Spanish nun. Bernini sought above all to express movement in sculpture, often with a dynamism which infused religious fervour even into works on mythological themes such as* Apollo and Daphne *(1622-1625) in the museum of the Villa Borghese, Rome (above right).*

PROJECTING matter into space, delimiting its presence there, the sculptor's art is both defiant and symbolic. Drawing its vitality from a constant state of tension with the architecture that provides both its frame and its support, it has to assert its identity within its environment, and derives from this necessity a measure of its dynamism and its dignity. Essentially, primordially, an act of artistic creation, sculpture also bears a message: its image of a divinity, a sovereign or simply of a man is never entirely gratuitous.

At the close of the sixteenth century, the sculptor's unremitting struggle with nature had led him into an impasse. Michelangelo, assailed by doubts, left his statues unfinished. Mannerism turned in on itself, caught up in convolutions of its own making, a serpent swallowing its own tail. In this atmosphere of introspection, the only possible outcome was escape or asphyxia. Western art, as it had so often in the past, rose to the challenge. Gathering new strength in the process, it would give consummate expression to the civilization that emerged from the great conflicts of the sixteenth century. Although this civilization was restless and precariously balanced, it lasted for two hundred years.

It would be absurd, spurious even, to attempt to list in order of importance the different modes of artistic expression that characterized this baroque civilization. However, its great master was unquestionably the sculptor Gian Lorenzo Bernini (1598-1680), an artist who was perhaps unsurpassed in the skill with which he instilled living movement and the force of illusion into his works. The personality of Bernini is so overwhelming, so fascinating, that it is tempting to see him as the personification of the magic spell that Baroque was to cast over all Europe for generations.

However, it should not be forgotten that Bernini himself was plagued by contradictions; he was an ardent, passionate man, but one who took Antiquity as his yardstick and never ceased to be haunted by the great vision of classical harmony. Nor is it possible to overlook the forces of opposition which were inspired by rivals such as the Italian Alessandro Algardi and the Fleming François Duquesnoy, and which, through a concern for simplification have been identified with an "anti-Baroque" and consequently "classical" movement. But simplification can often lead to a degree of misapprehension, if not to outright error. It is not false to say that one of the riches of sculpture in this period lies in the dialectical tension between Baroque and classicism. It is equally true that Baroque was a complex art whose very complexities undeniably add to its riches. And perhaps it is an example of an art form that contained deep within itself, embedded in an awareness of its own limitations, the reasons for its eventual decline and demise, firstly because it is an art that depends on immediacy, on capturing movement at the crucial moment, and secondly because it is a theatrical, self-contemplating art, and is thus sometimes charged with almost unbearable emotion—the emotion of pathos rather than tenderness.

Let us look first at Bernini's famous sculpture *The Ecstasy of St. Theresa,* which provoked such sardonic laughter on the part of the French scholar Charles de Brosses (1709-1777). In this work in a side-chapel of the Roman church of Sta. Maria della Vittoria, Bernini has arrested the flight of the golden arrow in the split second before it pierces the heart of the saint and mystic, capturing, in the same split second, the expression of ecstasy that illuminates her features. Meanwhile, at the crucial moment in this celebration of Christian spirituality, the members of the Cornaro family, to whom the chapel belonged and who are portrayed on each side of the composition in niches that bear a remarkable resemblance to boxes in an opera-house, gossip away in sublime indifference to the beatific vision that is taking place before their eyes.

In its force of contrast, ambiguity, illusion, illusionism even, this is undoubtedly a masterpiece of baroque sculpture, simultaneously expressing intense religious fervour and the worldliness of a society that lived as if it were on stage and believed that theatre was more real than life itself. In this work of art in which stage effects figure prominently, light falls mysteriously from a hidden source, softened by coloured filters, and lends its own glory to the wonderful group that occupies space with such assurance and such power (of fascination rather than persuasion) that the question of domination by or subjection to its architectural framework does not arise.

Nor should it be forgotten that Bernini was also outstanding at the staging of funeral scenes and spectacular ceremonies. His sculpture was designed to entrance the spectator. Even when he takes a subject from classical mythology, as in the *Apollo and Daphne* at the Villa Borghese in Rome, the transformation (in this case of the nymph's nubile body into a laurel tree) is designed to provoke stupefaction, a shudder of amazement. This is why the baroque sculptor found equal fulfilment in depicting Christian miracles and Ovidian metamorphoses: both reflected the same appetite for the marvellous.

The taste for the supernatural was expressed with particular gusto in the Germanic world, the home of Bernini's most faithful disciples and a place where Nature and reality had already in the past been subjected to violent distortions in the name of art. In the church at Rohr, the painter Cosmas Damian Asam and his brother, the sculptor Egid Quirin Asam, boldly staged (a theatrical term, again!) one of the Christian mysteries, *The Assumption of the Virgin.* In this work executed in plain and polychrome stucco, the Mother of Christ is suspended in midair, in defiance of the laws of gravity. The gestures and facial expressions of the Apostles gathered around the open tomb reveal a variety of reactions to this new challenge to reason. They are actors in a tragedy, playing their roles with passionate conviction. And we feel, as we do before the works of Bernini, how these great baroque sculptures reflect an authentic sincerity and intensity of faith, a piety that proceeds not from introspection but rather from a warm and outgoing desire to communicate, from an impulse towards charity, from confidence in God's infinite goodness and in divine grace (here is the language of mysticism again!).

Baroque sculpture did not, however, limit itself to the depiction of superbly performed great moments of sacred theatre. True, it is a product of religious fervour, and is the last sacred art worthy of the name in the Christian West. But baroque society was also the reflection of a system of government—of a monarchical system that was more or less absolute according to the traditions and pattern of development of each State. And baroque sculpture, if it served the Church,

The Ganges, a detail of Bernini's Four Rivers Fountain (1647-1670) which adorns the centre of the Piazza Navona in Rome. Bernini, Borromini (the architect of the Piazza Navona) and Guarini were the great trio of Italian baroque architects.

Photo © Gaetano Barone, Rome

Photos © SCALA, Florence

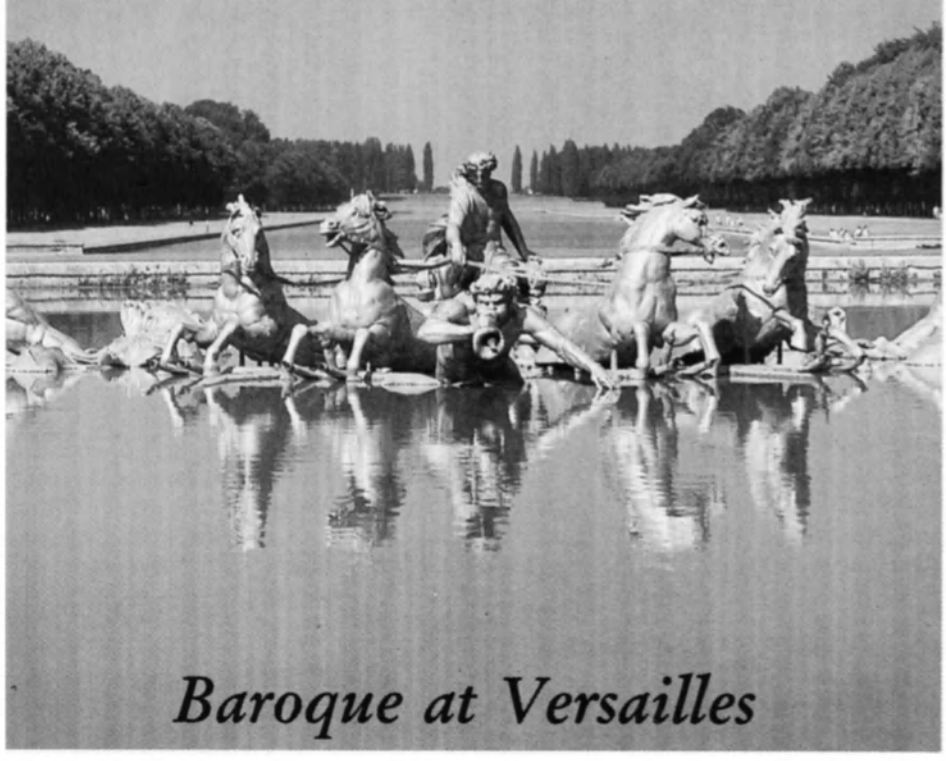

Photo © Dominique Genet, Paris

Baroque at Versailles

The 17th century in France is often seen as the age of classicism. The French painters of the period, including the greatest of them, Nicolas Poussin, seem to have been largely untouched by baroque vehemence. Even the Palace of Versailles, the masterpiece of the reign of Louis XIV designed by Jules Hardouin-Mansart, Louis Le Vau and André Le Nôtre, appears at first to be a classical work by virtue of its plan, with its buildings and gardens reflecting a concern for geometrical balance far removed from baroque sinuosity. Nevertheless, Charles Le Brun, who was commissioned to decorate the palace by Louis XIV in 1674, enriched it with many baroque scenic elements. Above, The Chariot of the Sun *by Jean-Baptiste Tuby. This gilded bronze sculpture in the Bassin d'Apollon, in the gardens of the palace, was executed from a plan by Le Brun.*

also served this monarchical and aristocratic society, providing a necessary setting for the ceremonial and liturgy of kings and princes. On the façades of palaces, on the walls of reception rooms, lining the paths that led through parks and gardens, forming the centrepiece of ponds and fountains, baroque sculpture proclaimed the virtues of a political system that would only begin to crumble much later, under critical assault from the philosophers of the Enlightenment.

Baroque sculpture adapted itself equally well to each of the two prevailing codes of expression: Biblical Christian iconography, and mythology as it had been formed by writers such as the Italian Cesare Ripa (1560-1645) into a more or less coherent symbolic system. With the exception (by no means absolute, however) of portraiture, allegory is sovereign and ever-present in baroque sculpture. Mythological figures are enrolled as actors to give some kind of demonstration. Sometimes, too, allegory is given form and movement without the support of mythology.

The French tend to reject the epithet "baroque" as a description of the great sculptures that adorn the park of Versailles. But what could be more profoundly baroque than this universe of marble and lead, representation of a veritable political cosmogony? It is true that the performers in this particular drama are somewhat less exuberant than their Italian or German counterparts. Restraint is a feature of French theatre. And more intellectual concerns are evident in this remarkable commission dating from 1674, the product of the imagination of the painter Charles Le Brun and of the talent of the sculptor François Girardon and his disciples and rivals. The completed work depicts an astonishing tetralogical system: the four seasons, the four humours, the four times of the day, the four forms of poetry, and so on.

This is an eminently baroque attempt to sum up the world of knowledge and knowledge of the world. The mode is secular, but the ambition is equal to that of the great religious compositions. Here once again is the ambiguity of baroque sculpture—herald of the irrational and the pathetic, yet a staunch defender of comprehension and rhetorical unification, despite its excesses and emotional turbulence and thanks to its transcendent spirit and its pursuit of the eternal. Baroque sculpture is the most determined attempt to give expression to the passion that moves men and lifts them to the sublime. ■

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COLOUR PAGES

Colour page right

Above left: head of a thief, detail of a polychrome wooden statue (1796-1799) carved by Antonio Francisco Lisboa, known as O Aleijadinho *(the Little Cripple), for the* Way of the Cross *series in the sanctuary of Bom Jesus de Matozinhos at Congonhas do Campo, Brazil.* *(See article page 39.)*

Photo © SCALA, Florence

Above right: Presentation of Christ in the Temple *(1641) by the French artist Simon Vouet (1590-1649). Vouet was one of the first artists to introduce an Italianate baroque style of painting into France, along with Charles Le Brun, decorator of the Palace of Versailles.*

Photo © D. Genet, Editions Mazenod, Paris. Louvre Museum

Below: the great ceiling fresco in the Palazzo Farnese, Rome. The fresco, on mythological themes, was painted between 1597 and 1604 by Annibale Carracci (1560-1609). This masterpiece of 17th-century Italian art was a major influence on the development of baroque painting and decorative arts. *(See article page 30.)*

Photo © SCALA, Florence

Centre pages

Above left: the decorative structure known as El Transparente *("The transparent"), executed by Narciso Tomé in the ambulatory of Toledo cathedral, Spain, between 1721 and 1732. Like the* Obradoiro, *the façade of the cathedral of Santiago de Compostela, it is an example of a highly ornamental, dynamic baroque addition to a building of a different style, in this case Gothic. (See article page 14.)*

Photo © Mas, Barcelona

Below left: high altar and upper nave of the church of St. John Nepomuk (1733-1746), Munich, Fed. Rep. of Germany, by the brothers Cosmas Damian Asam (1686-1739) and Egid Quirin Asam (1692-1750). (See article page 42.)

Photo © A. Hornak, London

Centre: Triumph of St. Ignatius *(1685), a ceiling fresco by the Jesuit priest Andrea Pozzo (1642-1709) in the church of St. Ignatius in Rome. In this masterpiece of illusionism, Pozzo creates above the real structure of the church a grandiose* trompe-l'œil *architectural setting opening on to the heavens, where the founder of the Jesuit order is welcomed. (See article page 30.)*

Photo © Scala, Florence

Above right: St. Bonaventura Lying in State *(1629) by Francisco de Zurbarán (1598-1664). The works of this Spanish painter, who had many commissions from monastic orders, are imposing in their sobriety and profound sense of mysticism. (See article page 14.)*

Photo © RMN, Paris. Louvre Museum

Below right: theatrical attitudes and gestures infuse a powerful sense of movement into this Assumption *(1718-1722), executed by Egid Quirin Asam for the choir of the monastery church of Rohr (Fed. Rep. of Germany). The work of the Asam brothers marked a high point in Central European baroque sculpture and decoration. (See article page 20.)*

Photo © Toni Schneiders, Lindau, Fed. Rep. of Germany

Colour page left

Above: interior of the church of the Third Order of St. Francis, Salvador, Brazil. With its gilded sculptures and mouldings, this early 18th-century church is typical of Brazilian and Portuguese architecture. (See article page 39.)

Photo Moisnard © Explorer, Paris

Below left: the "Angel with the Arquebus" (Peru). This typical figure of Andean baroque art is here shown in an anonymous 18th-century painting of the Cuzco School. (See article page 36.)

Photo © Rojas Mix, Paris. Manuel Mujica Crallo Collection

Below right: glazed and painted tile or azulejo *from the stairway of the pilgrimage church of Nossa Senhora dos Remédios (1750-1760), Lamego, Portugal. The* azulejo *is an essential decorative feature in Portuguese architecture and is also widely found in Spain and Brazil.*

Photo S. Marmounier © CEDRI, Paris

Photo Marmounier © CEDRI, Paris

The stately heritage of Portuguese Baroque

BY JOSE-AUGUSTO FRANÇA

Manor houses and palatial family seats such as that of the Mateus family at Vila Real, above, display the elegance of Portuguese 18th-century secular architecture.

PORTUGUESE Baroque did not really come into its own until the young King John V (1706-1750), his coffers filled with the recently discovered treasures of Brazil, determined to make a symbolic affirmation of his power with the ambitious project of the monastery-palace-church of Mafra, on the construction of which, from 1717, all the resources of the kingdom were to be concentrated.

J.F. Ludwig (known as Ludovice in Portugal), a Swabian goldsmith and architect who had spent some time in Italy, drew up a series of plans for Mafra, each more grandiose than the one before, which were inspired by St. Peter's, Rome, and by the Roman architecture of the Italian architect Carlo Fontana and his school. The monumental construction, said to be "greater than the kingdom", is undoubtedly one of the finest examples of the whole series of Germano-Italian monastery-palace-church complexes.

Just two years after work was started at Mafra, John V summoned the Piedmontese architect Filippo Juvarra to Lisbon and asked him to draw up plans for a royal palace and a patriarchal church. Frustrated by the length of time completion of such a building operation would take, the king decided instead to enlarge and embellish the palace that Philip II of Spain (who was also king of Portugal) had had built after 1580 on the banks of the Tagus.

The Hungarian Carlos Mardel proposed a series of elegant monumental fountains to adorn the capital. Meanwhile, in 1747, Mateus Vicente, a Portuguese architect trained at Mafra, began work on a country residence for the king's younger brother, at

Photos Marmounier © CEDRI, Paris

Right, peristyle of the palace-monastery of Mafra, epitome of Portuguese Baroque which flourished in the 18th century during the reign of King John V, who built Mafra near Lisbon in a bid to match the Escorial of Philip II of Spain (see photo page 16). Above, the façade of the church of Santa Casa da Misericordia at Viseu. Churches of this kind were copied with varying degrees of accuracy in Brazil, a Portuguese colony until the early 19th century.

Queluz, near Lisbon. The façade of this building, in which hints of Rococo could already be discerned, was the country's second major example of southern Baroque.

Shortly before his death, John V ordered the superb chapel of St. John the Baptist, designed by Luigi Vanvitelli in a style which foreshadowed the classical revival, to be brought from Rome and installed in the Jesuit church of St. Roch. Like the patriarchal church, this chapel became a veritable museum of religious jewellery and plate supplied by Roman workshops.

John V acquired his tastes from and shared his orders between Rome and Paris, the "Eternal City" supplying his needs in the religious field while Louis XV's capital met his secular requirements. Two Frenchmen, the illustrious silversmith Thomas Germain and the great scholar and collector Pierre Jean Mariette, were official suppliers to the Portuguese crown. The latter supplied the patron-king with a huge collection of engravings, lost, unfortunately, in the earthquake of 1755, which destroyed John V's capital and all its riches, five years after his death.

The city, which rose again rapidly following this catastrophe, thanks to the "enlightened" policies of the Marquis of Pombal, reflected the latter's rational, bourgeois taste rather than the Baroque of the preceding generation.

In the north of the country, however, where the old landed nobility was entrenched, far from the court, a different form of Baroque developed which made use of the exceptional plastic qualities of granite. The Tuscan Niccoló Nasoni (and later his disciple Figueiredo de Seixas) was the most influential architect of Porto, where he settled in 1725. The church of the Clérigos (1731-1749), whose graceful tower was to become the emblem of the city, and the Freixo and the Sao-Joao-Novo mansions, are among the buildings that typify the late baroque style specific to this part of the country, a style that with its rococo touches is somewhat reminiscent of that of Central Europe.

Towards the middle of the century, at Braga, not far from Porto, the architect A. Soares erected three important monumental buildings—the church of Falperra, the Town Hall, and the Raio mansion whose façade is the most intricately worked of all Portuguese civic architecture of the period. Indeed, country houses and manors (*solares*) were the field of predilection for sculptural late Baroque. In the homes of the Lobo-Machado family (at Guimarães), the Malheiro (Viana do Castelo) and the Mateus (Vila Real) the varied range of Portuguese art of the period 1730 to 1770 finds its most original expression.

In the Azores, in Madeira, in India, Macao and especially, in Brazil, Portuguese baroque architecture took root and left its mark.

Although Portuguese painting and sculpture of this period are of only secondary interest, in spite of the import of paintings and statues by the finest Roman artists to decorate Mafra, two decorative creations gave an original stamp to Portuguese Baroque — *azulejos* (painted faience tiles) and *talha* (gilded carved wood).

The *talha* of the altars, spreading out along the walls, provided the ideal décor for the "all-gold" church, both a practical and a semantic proposition fundamental to Portuguese Baroque. The *talha* harmonized with the plain blue on a white background of the *azulejos* which tiled the walls of cloisters, staircases, rooms, even the vaulted ceilings of churches, replacing pictures and tapestries. The religious themes and scenes from daily life that they depicted were copied from imported engravings and were framed with painted, *trompe l'œil* imitations of rich architectural mouldings.

Thus, from the monumental carved stone of Mafra to the scintilla of gilded carved wood and the thousand reflections of painted tiles, Portuguese Baroque, erected to the glory of John V, was a celebration of both the sacred and the sensual. ■

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The great illusionists

BY ARNAULD BREJON DE LAVERGNEE

"COUNTER-REFORMATION art", "the Jesuit style" ... these are but two of the countless designations that have been applied to baroque art. After a period of austerity which coincided with the end of the Mannerist school, ideas changed, the Church became less rigid in its attitude towards artists and there was a general resurgence in all the arts. Painting, sculpture and architecture combined to give birth to a new conception of the handling of space. Rome witnessed the genesis of a spectacular style, spread by the Jesuits and backed by the Church, which encouraged a visual approach to the teaching of dogma. The painted ceilings of Roman churches are the masterpieces of this illusionist art, a triumph of the wondrous and of decorative effervescence.

The seventeenth century ushered in a new kind of painting. The Italian critic Luigi Salerno expressed its guiding principle in these words: "The image is no longer just a matter of line or colour; the artist wants to convey something which goes beyond lines, colours and perspective and which strikes the viewer's feelings and imagination." To stimulate the imagination, the artist attempted to break down the barrier between the viewer and the work of art and to give his painting a "non-finite" aspect.

The Bolognese painter Annibale Carracci's purpose seems to have been to bring the figures in his paintings closer to the space occupied by the viewer by creating the illusion that his paintings were a continuation of real space. The revolution introduced by Caravaggio, it would appear, was the sanctification of everyday life. A few years later it was Bernini's turn to complete the process and with him the frontiers between art and life were finally eliminated. What, then, were the stages in this artistic revolution which accompanied the development of the baroque style? Everything happened in Rome, in the space of three generations.

The Crucifixion of St. Peter *(1600-1610), oil on canvas by Caravaggio, below, is today preserved in the church of Santa Maria del Popolo, Rome. In his short life (1573-1610) Caravaggio paved the way for baroque painting through his emphasis on heightened emotional tension, his dramatic use of light and shade, and his realistic depictions of religious themes.*

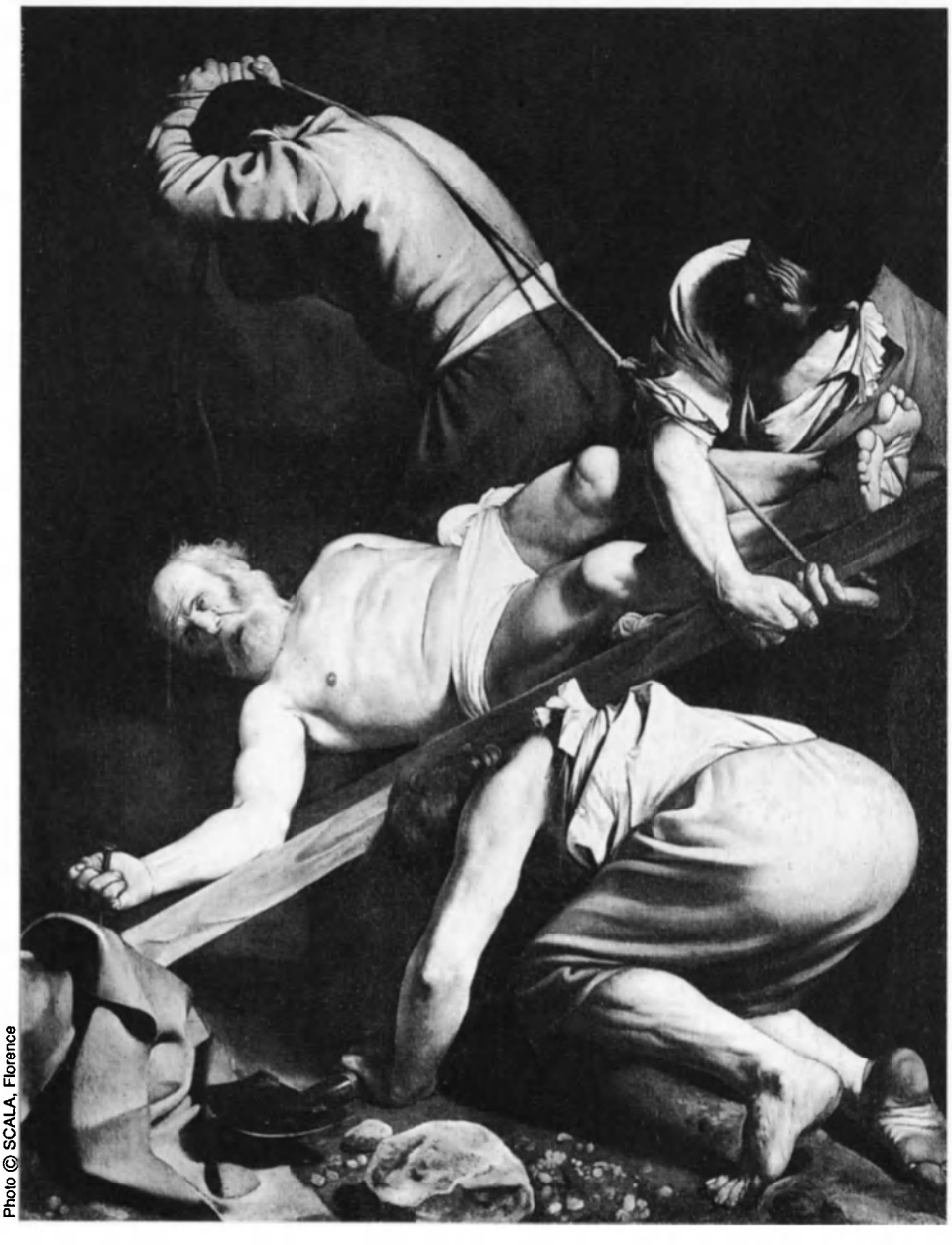

Photo © SCALA, Florence

Annibale Carracci and the new style. In 1595, Annibale Carracci (1560-1609) arrived in Rome at the invitation of Cardinal Odoardo Farnese. In addition to many easel paintings, he created one of the great masterpieces of seventeenth-century Italian art when he painted the ceiling vault of the gallery of the Palazzo Farnese (1597-1609) for which he took as his theme the Triumph of Love *(Amor omnia vincit)*. Against a background of highly complex *trompe l'œil* architecture (imitation vaulting, imitation of the wooden frames that usually surround paintings, imitation bronze and marble statues on which a golden light plays), Carracci unfolded mythological scenes that are inventive, joyful and dynamic, in accordance with the criteria of "ideal beauty". The decorative scheme of the ceiling of the Farnese gallery was so richly inventive that it influenced ceiling decoration for generations and left its mark on both classical and baroque artists.

We must turn to the Swiss art historian Heinrich Wölfflin (1864-1945) for an explanation of the baroque style, which he distinguishes from the classical style on the following five counts:

- the classical style is linear, stressing the limits of the subject which it defines and isolates. Baroque style is pictorial and its subjects have a natural relationship with their surroundings;
- the classical style is a construction of planes, whereas baroque art is built in depth;
- Classicism is a closed system, the Baroque is open;
- the unity of the classical style is a composition of clearly distinct elements, the unity of the baroque style is an indivisible unity;
- Classicism aims above all for clarity whereas the Baroque is less concerned with its personages as individuals than with their inter-relationships.

In its strict sense, the word *Baroque* (from the Portuguese word *barroco*, used to describe a pearl that is crudely or irregularly shaped) applies to an architectural style created in Rome at the beginning of the seventeenth century and which spread later to other countries. Gradually the word came to be applied to other arts (such as sculpture, painting, music and poetry). Although its dates vary from country to country, there is general agreement in situating the baroque period as a whole between the beginning of

Photo © SCALA, Florence

The great age of Italian baroque painting came to an end with the Venetian artist Giovanni Battista Tiepolo (1696-1770). The elegance, spirit and lightness of touch of Tiepolo's work influenced much 18th-century painting, especially in Spain where Tiepolo spent much of his life. Above, **The Meeting of Antony and Cleopatra,** *a fresco from the Palazzo Labia in Venice.*

the seventeenth century and the first half of the eighteenth century.

Giovanni Lanfranco (1582-1647) was one of the first adepts of the new style. Fascinated by the diffused luminosity and the daring handling of space in the frescoes of Correggio (1494-1534), Lanfranco developed some new experiments in his own frescoes—use of contrasting light and shade to obtain greater expression, a taste for bold, dynamic compositions, and spectacular effects and illusions.

One of the first major commissions he received from the Roman clergy was for a fresco of imposing dimensions on the theme of the *Assumption of the Virgin,* for the dome of the church of S. Andrea della Valle (1625).

Splendour and unreality; the Baroque comes of age. Pietro da Cortona (1596-1669) was the first truly baroque Italian artist. The Bernini of painting, Pietro da Cortona was the artist of the Church triumphant (his career spanned six pontificates) and of absolutism. He was the originator of a style of painting that was to be followed by Le Brun but whose aesthetic would be more fully understood by Luca Giordano and Tiepolo.

The grandiose plans of Pope Urban VIII (Maffeo Barberini), to make of Rome a worthy capital, were carried through by several leading artists including Bernini and Pietro da Cortona. In one of Pietro's major works, the frescoed ceiling of the Palazzo Barberini (1633-1639), the *trompe l'œil* architectural features and sculptures merge into the main body of the work to give a "total painting" effect and this gives a unity to the complex allegories depicted. In the central section, Divine Providence, enthroned on clouds above Chronos and the three Fates, receives a crown of stars from the hand of Immortality and displays the Barberini coat of arms.

Following on from the professions of faith of Carracci and Caravaggio, we see the last of the three fundamental currents of seventeenth-century Roman painting taking shape. With its splendours and unreality, its riot of colours and forms set free in space, this is a style which speaks to us in a language close to that of Bernini. Within a setting of *trompe l'œil* architecture, a host of symbolic figures spill out against wide open blue skies in a ceaseless undulation of flowing drapery and golden ringlets. Heraldic arms, garlands of flowers and dancing cherubs enliven the representation of an ideal world in which earthly glories receive their highest accolade in a free and happy rapprochement with the symbols of Catholicism triumphant and of classical mythology.

Spectacular painted ceilings in 17th-century Roman churches and palaces reveal the fondness of baroque artists for fantastic, illusionist effects. Left, **The Triumph of the Name of Jesus** *(1662-1683), a ceiling fresco painted by Giovanni Battista Gaulli, known as Baciccia, in the church of Il Gesù in Rome. Carved and painted figures blend with imitation and real architectural structures to create an extraordinary* **trompe-l'œil** *effect.*

Photos © SCALA, Florence

Remarkably, the shapes and forms are not confined within the frame which appears behind imitation stucco atlantes over which the figures enthroned on the clouds freely spread. The frame is an integral part of the painting, giving a profound sense of spatial unity which is underlined by the warmth of the Venetian palette. The renewal is total and complete, with forms that seem to engender each other spontaneously.

Some thirty years later, in his last great decorative work, the fresco *(Vision of St. Philip Neri during the Building of the Church, 1664-1665)* for the vault of the nave of the Chiesa Nuova, Pietro da Cortona created a new form of illusionism. The importance of this work needs to be underlined since it influenced most of the decorative work for church naves in Rome and its surroundings throughout the eighteenth century. With its daring foreshortening, its original *di sotto in su* (upward movement) and, above all, the way in which the marvellous and the divine are presented as if they are part of everyday life, this fresco remains unmatched. The new ambition of the artists of the middle years of the century was to make the fantastic seem credible.

Naples was, perhaps, the second great artistic centre of the seventeenth century in Italy. From Caravaggio to Luca Giordano, a whole range of experiences clashed only to combine, often with very original results. At the heart of baroque creativity, Luca Giordano's prolific, impetuous inventiveness laid the foundations of eighteenth-century European painting. A felicitous poetic streak and tender humanity free of all bombast, set him apart from the other great Italian decorative artists. His fresco in the gallery of the library of the Medici-Riccardi palace, in Florence (1682-1683), that great, luminous fable, was born of a fusion of many influences and experiments (Venetian art, the message of Pietro da Cortona...). On the themes of the *Apotheosis of Human Life and of the Life of Thought*, Luca Giordano carried through a rigidly established, allegorical, symbolic and mythological programme with a supreme liberty of invention to produce a unified composition that was both balanced and daring.

Gaulli and Andrea Pozzo: illusion carried to perfection. In Rome, some extremely important decorative works were created at the end of the century. From 1680 to 1685 the Genoese artist Giovanni Battista Gaulli (1639-1709, also known as Baciccia) transformed Il Gesù, the Counter-Reformation-style mother church of the Jesuit order, built during the previous century by Giacomo da Vignola, into a baroque church with a nave fresco on the theme of the *Triumph of the Name of Jesus*.

Stimulated by Bernini, Gaulli at Il Gesù propagated Bernini's ideas, amply illustrating his revolutionary pictorial concepts. Baroque artists were always seeking to introduce an element of illusion and at Il Gesù it is to be found in the plasticity of the painted figures, mingled with the stucco figures, and in their movement beyond the architectural framework on to the coffering of the vaulting and into the real space of the church. Here for the first time can be seen the composition characteristic of late baroque frescoes, in which the juxtaposing of the darker areas is of greater importance than the distribution of the figures. Since some of the stucco figures are painted and some painted figures have been placed where stucco figures would have been expected, it is no longer possible to distinguish painting from sculpture. Gaulli gave his paintings a strong relief effect, influenced by Bernini's sculptures, and this, coupled with his vigorous distribution of light and shade, makes even compositions as vast and as well-peopled as the Gesù frescoes clear and legible. As well as imparting a certain mystic quality, the divine light builds and organizes the entire composition.

It has often been remarked that the great artisans of baroque art active in Rome came from northern Italy. Andrea Pozzo (1642-1709), a native of Trento, confirms the rule. The vault fresco of the church of St. Ignatius, begun in 1668 by Pozzo, himself a Jesuit priest, extols the glory of the founder of the Jesuit order. Above the real architectural structures of the church, he painted, with brilliant *trompe l'œil* effect, the walls and arcades of another great temple which opens out on to infinite heavens peopled with groups of angels, of the blessed and of allegorical figures. With the vault of the church of Il Gesù, painted by Gaulli, this is, perhaps, the most solemn and the most forthright celebration of the splendours of the Church in the entire decorative output of seventeenth-century baroque art.

Illusionism, the *trompe l'œil* effect sought by Gaulli and Pozzo, gives rise to a merging of pictorial space and real space. With Gaulli some of the painted figures are projected into the real space of the church occupied by the viewer. Pozzo, on the other hand, doubles the real space of the church by the creation of a painted space. At the centre of his fresco Pozzo added a vanishing point around which his ceiling was organized. Thanks to this innovation, the effects of painting mingle with those of architecture. As for Gaulli, he had recourse to sculpture. This development was to triumph during the eighteenth century. The power of the colour and the studied virtuosity beguile the viewer's eye with their prestige, but stir no emotion in the soul. They are beautiful paintings and their technical prowess is seductive, but they do not lead the mind on to meditation. Painting has become a feast for the eyes. The beauty of reality is revealed, but not the secret inner anguish of the soul. ■

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'A new form of self-expression'

BY LEOPOLDO ZEA

THE term *baroque* refers to forms of cultural expression orginating in a distinctive conception of life and humanity. The Renaissance, basing itself on a distant Greek past and turning away from the Christian view of man, had evolved a new ideal and a new idea of mankind. Renaissance man rejected the heritage of medieval man, the creature and servant of God, and wished to sever all connections with the immediate past. A new start was to be made. Man should be the architect of his own destiny, as the French philosopher René Descartes would later insist.

The Baroque in Europe was therefore associated with a certain rationalism. It was more than simply an aesthetic phenomenon. Its striking diversity, variety of ideas and involution of forms reflect an attitude to life that was consonant with Jesuit rationalism and the dialectic of Spinozism. As an artistic phenomenon, it gave rise to a number of different forms of expression, among which Spanish Baroque appears to have been the origin of baroque art in general.

Across the sea lay America, the object and the instrument of the dreams of imperial Spain. In the sixteenth-century controversy about whether or not Indians should be considered as human beings, the ideas of the Spanish historian and theologian Juan Ginés de Sepúlveda prevailed over those of the Dominican missionary to the Americas, Bartolomé de Las Casas. The result was that the indigenous people of Latin America were regarded as *homunculi*—something less than human beings—and as such only fit to be the servants and slaves of those who were considered supreme examples of the human race.

With their status as human beings called into question, forced to reproduce exactly the models imposed on them by the dominant culture, the people of the Ibero-American colonies gradually became aware of their identity. "What am I," they asked, "a man, or a *homunculus?*"

In the sixteenth century, the creole culture of Latin America was a mere copy, and sometimes a poor one, of metropolitan models. Of course, in the following century the models came from an Iberian peninsula that was aware of its decline. The Baroque was an expression of that awareness, and the spirit of Spain was manifested in it. And this kind of artistic expression, with its characteristic diversity, was to enable Latin American people to manifest their disputed identity, albeit unconsciously. Thus appeared the marvellous products of Latin American baroque art, with its proliferation of contorted lines which expressed the originality of those who had fashioned them. Outstanding examples of this art include the little church of Tonantzintla, in Puebla (Mexico), in which cherubs and saints are shown with Indian faces; and the flowers and offerings which appear in other baroque works of art throughout Latin America.

But what is the true status of these works? Since they are not faithful reproductions of baroque models, should they not be considered simply as mediocre copies?

If they are considered to be poor copies, it is because they do not closely resemble the original; they differ from the model. Despite the painstaking efforts of the copyists, the copy was a distortion of the model. In time, their failure to execute faithful copies was to be the undoing of these artists; they were

Photo © Rojas Mix, Paris

Left, 17th-century portrait of the Mexican poetess Juana Inés de la Cruz (1648 or 1651-1695), one of the great figures of baroque literature in the Spanish language. Her works include religious and secular plays and poetry, notably an outstanding series of love sonnets.

Photos Kal Muller © CEDRI, Paris

A remarkable example of Mexican colonial baroque architecture, the church of the Jesuit college of Tepotzotlán, above, was built between 1760 and 1762, at a time when decoration was beginning to proliferate but was still executed with the lyrical freshness characteristic of local artists. (See also back cover for the decoration of the church of Santa Maria Tonantzintla.) Statue of the Virgin, above right, in the Museo del Virreinato, Tepotzotlán, exemplifies the gracefulness of Hispano-American sculpture. The devil's horns beneath the Virgin's feet, a typically Spanish feature, symbolize victory over Evil.

excluded from the colonial system, and even became subversive of it.

In Latin America, the Church was the only channel through which culture could reach the people, and, repressive though it was, it set out to investigate the nature and true situation of the people in that part of the world. Like the sixteenth-century Franciscans, the Jesuits, from the seventeenth century onwards, aimed to find out more about the art forms that were characteristic of Latin American people and their environment.

In the eighteenth century, conscious or unconscious attempts at reconciliation begun in the baroque period took the form of a new, rationalist approach, which tried to bring together the imported and the indigenous, the internal and the external. An effort was made to reconcile the dominant culture with the specific nature of the people who were subjected to it, and to make the anachronistic nature of that culture compatible with the new forms of cultural expression that had replaced it in Europe.

Such conciliatory and casuistical attitudes placed the old colonial order in a difficult situation. Eighteenth century colonialism claimed to be enlightened. It tried, albeit despotically, to lead its Latin American subjects along the path that the new nations were treading—the path of progress for all peoples—and it came up against the Society of Jesus. Enlightened despotism proved to be at variance with the Jesuits' eclectic, conciliatory attitude, which had already made it possible for the theocratic system to be accepted in countries such as Paraguay. In the end, the attempt made in the baroque period to reconcile the irreconcilable jeopardized the system which it was supposed to reinforce.

After their exile in Italy, a group of Mexican Jesuits made it their business to study the situation of Mexico and of Latin America in general. As a result of their investigations, the characteristics of the region, instead of being seen as worthless, came to be regarded as the basis for a new form of self-expression. They also drew attention to the rights of certain peoples to be themselves, not merely skilful copyists of alien cultural ideas. From such a view to subversion was but a step. The outcast became a rebel.

The "mediocre copy" was actually a means of self-expression. When the people of Latin America realized this, they began to forge their own identity. It was then that they had to try to reconcile the seemingly irreconcilable. To the question, "Who are we? Spaniards or Indians?", they answered, with Simón Bolívar, "We are Americans!" ■

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The Angel with the Arquebus

BY MIGUEL ROJAS MIX

ONE of the most typical figures of Latin American baroque art is that of a dandified angel with swan's wings and a broad-brimmed hat with a feather in it. He is richly clad in a garment with lace ruffles and a greatcoat with a gold and silver lining, and he holds a heavy arquebus.

Although found only in Andean painting, the "Angel with the Arquebus" is a supremely representative feature of the baroque art of Latin America, which is at once a magnificent and theatrical form of art, and also a style whose purpose was to induce the Indian to accept the power of God and the king and, through religion and force of arms, to make him part of colonial society. One of its most common themes was the system of *mestizaje*, or ethnic intermixture, in which people were placed in castes according to their origin and the colour of their skin.

Baroque art in Latin America has left an indelible mark on the individual and on the course of history. Even today, many writers consider themselves to be baroque writers. In fact, baroque art is the art of the New World. The mixture of Iberian (in which there was already an Arab element) with Indian and Black elements produced a dis-

Photos © Almasy, Paris

Left, portal of the church of San Francisco, La Paz, Bolivia, an outstanding example of Andean Baroque. Construction began in 1743. The decoration with anthropomorphic and animal motifs is typical of Latin American "churrigueresque" architecture. Above, façade of the Jesuit church, known as La Compañía, in Quito, Ecuador. Completed in 1765, the church incorporates twisted columns and other Spanish and Italian features. The interior is decorated with magnificent gilded wood carvings in local style.

tinctive style which some have called Indo-Hispanic, some creole *(criollo)*, or mestizo. In accordance with its regional characteristics, it has also been called "Andean Baroque" and "Poblano Baroque" (after the Mexican town of Puebla).

A proselytizing art, Baroque was the "Bible of the poor", the gospel conveyed to the Indian's mind by images. While the Protestants preached simplicity and modesty, used no images and made no attempt at evangelization, the Council of Trent (1545-1563) took a stand against pagan images, extolled the Eucharist, the Virgin and the Pope, advocated evangelization and the cult of the saints, and laid down rules to the effect that the saints should be portrayed in a setting suggestive of martyrdom and ecstasy. As late as 1782, instructions were still being issued for artists which repeated the Council's resolutions concerning iconography and set forth detailed rules on the degree of nudity that was permissible for each saint, the age at which he should be depicted and the attitude in which he should be shown.

The baroque style was a perfect way of conveying to the Indians the idea that they should accept their new destiny. Classical art is an art of moderation and balance, an art that is concerned with general principles, and seeks what is universal. Its characters are rhetorical figures. Baroque art is the opposite; it expresses what order and moderation cannot express—emotion, grief, ecstasy and faith. Its representation of mystical feelings is close to everyday life, and its examples are taken from actuality. Its Christs are sacred actors in a human tragedy. Carved in wood painted the colour of flesh, with real hair, eyelashes and eyelids, with glass eyes and real clothing, they are more like characters in a waxworks exhibition than sacred images. In the "Christ of Sorrows", the subject most frequently treated in Latin America, sorrow is dramatized in a paroxysm of grief. The figure is covered with blood (made of scarlet cochineal and pitch) so that the viewer almost feels the pain of the wounds, and the face and body are distorted by deep suffering. The convincing realism of this pain, which is in no sense symbolic, was intended to show the Indians that their trials were as nothing compared to the sufferings of Christ.

In its early period, Latin American baroque art was thoroughly European in character. Most of the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century paintings are by European artists who worked for the New World, or copies of engravings brought from Europe. Yet even then there was a certain intermixture of styles. The plans of the cathedrals were of Roman or Spanish origin, but they were considerably modified in the course of execution. And of course the "plateresque" or Spanish Renaissance style was a product of the intermixture of the *mudéjar* style and late Gothic.

The second period of Latin American Baroque began when local artists emerged. Although ideas and works of art continued to be imported, certain changes and the emphasis placed on certain themes reveal a growing independence. Because of the prevailing taste for pictures that told a story, a touching story, with an element of fantasy, art of this period is often called "primitive" art. The wood carvings known in the Nahuatl language as *tequitqui* reveal the sensibility of the Indian. The combination of realism and abstraction in these carvings shows the persistence of pre-Columbian ideas.

Iconography was also modified by the Black sensibility. Baroque art (and especially rococo art) used the Black as a decorative feature. In Europe he was a figure holding a lamp, or, in tapestries, a counterpoint to the white horse whose reins he held. In Latin America Blacks were at first depicted as sumptuously liveried servants or as figures wearing motley. In both cases they added a picturesque note. As sensibility is a form of narcissism, an African element was bound to appear in Latin America to lend dignity to the popular image. Its failure to do so would have been an act of self-abnegation by the artists themselves, who were mestizos, mulattoes or Blacks. Thus African gods slipped surreptitiously into the cult of the saints, and in many cases a darker complexion, rendered by the mixture of wax and paint used to depict the flesh of the Virgin or the angels, was enough to make them recognizable as Blacks from Brazil, Colombia or other regions with a large African population.

The Latin American element in baroque art did not, however, simply consist of modification or stylistic exaggeration. The ultra-baroque or churrigueresque style nowhere reached such a pitch of ostentation as it did in Latin America, especially Mexico, but many of the motifs that artists in the New World began to use were quite different in spirit: decorative forms such as masks with Aymara or Quechua faces, known as *indátides*, or the delicately gilded frames with carvings of macaws, capybaras, monkeys and other creatures, in settings of papayas, pineapples and banana trees. Such motifs were depicted with a "flat" technique, as if the artists refused to accept the illusion of volume and space known to Western art.

Other highlights of Latin American Baroque are the screens that are distinctive features of churches in the New World, but

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The work of Andean sculptors in Peru, Ecuador and Bolivia ranges from imitations of Spanish religious sculpture to depictions of local themes. Above, detail of a crucifix by Gaspar de Sangurima in the monastery of the Immaculate Conception, Cuenca, Ecuador. Christ is portrayed in the realistic style typical of Spanish sculptors, with a stream of blood flowing from His side. Right, Peruvian statue of the baby Jesus dressed as an Indian, with cap and poncho.

Photo © Rozas, Lima

whose filigreed carving recalls *mudéjar* taste; other creole saints as well as the Angel with the Arquebus; *Matamoros* images, in which Indians are portrayed instead of Moors, and which should really be called *Mataindios* in Latin America; depictions of the Magi in which colonial artists include not only a Black king, but sometimes a mestizo and an Indian, so that the subject becomes a metaphor of race; the guitar-playing sirens beside the doors of San Lorenzo de Potosi, in Bolivia, and in the choir of San Miguel de Pomata, in Peru; the creole Virgins—the *morenas* (Black women) or *mamacitas* (little mothers) as the Indians call them. In the church of San Juan on the shores of Lake Titicaca, the child Jesus is shown wearing a poncho and a cap like those the Aymara children in the district wear, and to avoid any possible confusion is labelled with the inscription "I am Jesus". Innumerable painted panels show Incas in gala dress, while others show impoverished Indians. And of course there are many specifically colonial characters and themes, such as Santa Rosa de Lima (1586-1617), a saint much portrayed by eighteenth-century painters, and the "Christ of the Earthquakes", who is venerated in the cathedral of Cuzco and in many other Andean churches, a Christian way of exorcizing the fears of a people that has always felt threatened by the gods of Nature.

Baroque art in Latin America is not a mere transposition of Spanish or Portuguese art. It is a hybrid art. And it embraces more than two cultures, for along with the Spanish tradition it received the Arab heritage in the form of the *mudéjar* style. It is said that the Indian contribution is shown in a preference for a range of pure colours and in the use of abstraction in the portrayal of figures. But the Black influence can also be seen, both in the dark complexion of angels and Virgins and in the syncretism of African gods with the traditional Christian saints. A marvellously enriched style emerged from all these influences, the style of an art that was fundamental to a new world. Such is the art we know as "Latin American Baroque". ■

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The triumph of O Aleijadinho

BY AUGUSTO C. DA SILVA TELLES

Photos Samuel Costa © Explorer, Paris

ARCHITECTURE and the other arts practised in Brazil in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries or imported there from Europe were merely the transposition of what was then being done in Portugal.

Early buildings such as the parish church of Olinda, in the State of Pernambuco, which later became a cathedral, the Jesuit Church of Grace in the same city, and the many religious houses, chapels, churches, colleges, monasteries and convents built by the Jesuits, Franciscans, Benedictines and Carmelites along the coast, all shared a stylistic sobriety and simplicity in the decoration of façades and other architectural elements.

These features were still found in seventeenth-century architecture and in the buildings erected as part of the reconstruction campaign that took place at the end of the Dutch occupation of the Northeast (1630-1653), although in the second half of the century volutes, pinnacles and other decorative features, in some cases large, bold and elegant, began to appear on porches, pediments and bell-towers. These were the first signs of the coming of the Baroque. Examples can be seen in the Franciscan monasteries at Olinda and Igarassú (State of Pernambuco), and in the church of the Jesuit College, now the cathedral, at Salvador (State of Bahia).

But the most notable form of baroque expression in Brazil was the art of *talha*, decorative gilded and polychromed wood carving, which was practised on altarpieces in chapels and churches, and spread to the walls and ceilings of high altars and to transepts, and in many cases to the nave and side-chapels as well. Gilded and polychromed decorative carving thus covered most of the interior of the churches; surfaces were ornate, full of movement, and colourful.

The first distinctively baroque carvings in Brazil date from the end of the seventeenth century. The columns of concentric arches were executed in spiral or "Solomonic" form and covered with vine-leaves, pelicans or figures of angels, while walls and roofs were intersected by carvings that framed painted or low-relief panels. Notable examples are

Above, façade of the Carmelite church in the Pelourinho district of Salvador (State of Bahia), a major centre of Brazilian colonial art (now included on Unesco's World Heritage List). Left, fresco painted on the wooden ceiling of the church of Nossa Senhora do Rosário, Persépolis, State of Goias.

Ouro Preto, an old city in the Brazilian State of Minas Gerais (now included on Unesco's World Heritage List), is a showcase of Brazilian baroque art. Outstanding among the city's many baroque monuments is the church of St. Francis of Assisi, the work of the great mulatto sculptor, architect and designer Antonio Francisco Lisboa, known as O Aleijadinho *(1730-1814), who was born in Ouro Preto. Right, view of the nave. Far right, the stairway, terrace and façade of the sanctuary of Bom Jesus de Matozinhos, at Congonhas do Campo, Minas Gerais, Aleijadinho's masterpiece. For the sanctuary, built between 1796 and 1799, he created a series of polychromed wood carvings representing the Last Supper and the Stations of the Cross (see also the head of the thief reproduced on colour page 23) and the soapstone statues of the twelve Old Testament prophets which line the stairway.*

the carvings in the monastery of São Bento (Rio de Janeiro), in the main side-chapel of the Cathedral (Salvador), and in the Gilded Chapel of the Third Order of St. Francis at Recife (Pernambuco).

Later, however, in the 1730s, altarpieces and other decorative carving in churches underwent a definite change. The aim was to create a sense of movement by breaking up lines and surfaces. Canopies, massive carved figures and voluted pilasters appeared, of the kind which can be seen in the church of São Francisco da Penitência in Rio de Janeiro.

From then on, as in Portugal, the new forms evolved by the Borrominian school (which took its name from the Italian architect Borromini) began to influence plan and volume. Walls were given a sense of movement through the use of elongated polygonal plans, oval plans, or plans formed of overlapping ovals, while a strong vertical thrust was the dominant feature of the façades.

Among the churches built in this style are the Glória do Outeiro (Rio de Janeiro), which stands on a hill beside the bay and whose plan is based on two elongated and juxtaposed octagons, the church of São Pedro dos Clérigos in Recife, the high façade of which is an exceptionally powerful example of baroque movement, and the church of Conceição da Praia, in Salvador.

Another church in the same style is the parish church of Our Lady of Pilar, in Ouro Preto (State of Minas Gerais), which is unique in that its polygonal nave is an autonomous structure of carved and gilded wood inserted into a building whose plan is rectangular.

The church of the Third Order of St. Francis, in Salvador, which dates from the first half of the eighteenth century, is an outstanding example of baroque art. With its façade entirely covered with sandstone carvings, in the manner of Spanish American churches, it is unique in Brazilian architecture.

In the second half of the eighteenth cen-

Photos © Pedro Lobo, Arch. SPAAN, Rio de Janeiro

tury both architecture and decorative wood carving began to be influenced by the rococo style. In Bahia and Rio de Janeiro States, Rococo appears notably in highly ornamental gilded carvings, such as the sculptures in the nave of the church of the Third Order Carmelites in Cachoeira and the sacristy of the Carmelite convent in Salvador and, in Rio de Janeiro, the sculptures in the chapels of the Santíssimo Sacramento, and the shrines in the Benedictine monastery and in the chapel adjoining the church of the Third Order Carmelites. This chapel was built by Mestre Valentim (Valentim da Fonseca e Silva), the outstanding architect, wood-carver and sculptor in Rio de Janeiro of that time.

In the Northeast, around Recife and Olinda, baroque and rococo influence brought animation to the structure of façades. The church of the monastery of São Bento, in Olinda, and the Carmelite basilica in Recife are notable examples of the architecture of this period in northeastern Brazil.

But it was in the State of Minas Gerais that the baroque and rococo movement in Brazil had the most comprehensive impact on architecture, especially in the work of the great architect and sculptor Antonio Francisco Lisboa (1730-1814), known as O Aleijadinho (the Little Cripple)—in church façades, plans, volumes, carvings, and the use of space. Because of the geographical situation of Minas Gerais and because there were no convents or monasteries of the regular orders in the region, architects building parish churches and churches for fraternities and tertiary orders were not directly exposed to Portuguese influence and could thus produce forms of architecture, sculpture and decoration which were to some extent original.

Of special interest in this period are the Franciscan churches in Ouro Preto and São João del Rei and the Carmelite church in Ouro Preto. These buildings share certain common features. Their plans consist of curves and straight lines which are not arranged in series but create lines and points of tension, while porches carved in steatite (soapstone) bring dynamism to their façades and constitute the focal point of the composition.

In the Franciscan church at Ouro Preto, the transept, with carved soapstone pulpits, opens on to the high altar whose retable of polychrome and gilded wood echoes the dynamics of the façade and joins with the vault and sides to form a unity.

The supreme example of Brazilian Baroque is Aleijadinho's masterpiece, the sanctuary of Bom Jesus de Matozinhos, in Congonhas do Campo, also in Minas Gerais. This magnificent example of the arts of architecture, sculpture and landscape, now included on Unesco's World Heritage List, stands on a hill-top overlooking broad valleys. Life-size soapstone statues of the twelve Old Testament prophets stand on parapets lining the stairway leading to the church, creating an extraordinary impression of rhythm and movement. On the slope in front of the church, preserved in chapels of more recent construction, are the polychromed wood carvings, also by Aleijadinho, which are known as "The Way of the Cross", and include seven impressive figures of Christ. ■

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The art of persuasion

BY CHRISTIAN NORBERG-SCHULZ

DURING the eighteenth century, the landscape of Catholic Central Europe became saturated with religious monuments: roadside crucifixes, statues of the "bridge saint" John Nepomuk, calvaries (mostly in combination with a *via crucis*), pilgrimage churches, and a multitude of new monasteries. The architecture of the epoch was thus closely related to the environment, which it sought to transform into a "sacred landscape" which everywhere should remind man of the "true faith".

In accordance with this aim, the works of art and architecture in question have an exuberant and persuasive character. The manifest religious ecstasy of the figures is echoed in the flame-like towers of the churches, in the interior of which heaven becomes visible in the illusionary paintings of the vaults. Even the palaces of the aristocracy have a similar expression. Being rulers "by God's grace", princes also had to present the basic axioms of faith.

In general, we may say that baroque art and architecture is a product of the Counter-Reformation, the basis of which was the *esprit de système* of the seventeenth century, that is, the belief that the world may be understood as a system deducible from a few immutable *a priori* dogmas. According to counter-reformatory policy, these dogmas ought to be presented as vividly as possibly. At the Council of Trent it was decided that "The Bishops shall carefully teach this: that, by means of the Stories of the Mysteries of our Redemption, portrayed by paintings or other representations, the people are instructed and confirmed in the habit of remembering, and continually revolving in mind the articles of faith".

Persuasion thus became the basic means of achieving the *participation* needed by the system. The most famous example of this approach can be found in the "Spiritual Exercises" of St. Ignatius Loyola, which aimed at an imitation of Christ by means of imagination and empathy. And the Jesuits in fact made an essential contribution to the diffusion of baroque art.

Imagination as a means implies that the world is transformed into a "theatre" and that the church is intended as a *teatrum sacrum* where the articles of faith are enacted. Hence the expressive and illusionary character of baroque art. Following the principles laid down at the Council of Trent, baroque art and architecture were born in Rome, the centre of the Catholic Church. In architecture we may distinguish between two currents: the truly theatrical one, developed by Bernini, where architecture serves as a splendid but conventionally ordered background to the "stories" told by illusionary painting and sculpture, and the "architectural" one, invented by Borromini, where space itself is set into motion and becomes a means of emotional expression. Borromini's more original treatment of architecture as such was further developed by Guarini, who in numerous projects for Theatine churches defined space as a system of interdependent cells which seem to be subject to a movement of pulsation. In fact, Guarini considered the pulsating, undulating movement a basic property of nature.

As a manifestation of the Counter-Reformation, Central European Baroque has a double face. Firstly, it aims at persuading the *people*, and from the very beginning it therefore assimilated local traditions and beliefs to become part of the world of daily life. It also had to express the *power* of those who were the guardians of faith, that is, the bishop and the prince, who in Central Europe were

Left, interior and vault of the Niklaskirche (the church of St. Nicholas) in the Little Quarter, Prague, Czechoslovakia. Begun in 1703 by the architect Christoph Dientzenhofer and completed by his son Kilian Ignaz, it has been described as "one of Europe's most beautiful churches".

Below, façade of the Karlskirche (St. Charles' church) in Vienna (Austria) built between 1715 and 1737 by the architect Johann Bernhard Fischer von Erlach. Austria played a leading role in the flowering and diffusion of Central European Baroque.

often one and the same person. Therefore, the Central European Baroque is popular as well as grandiose, and aims at communicating with "everybody".

The architecture of the Counter-Reformation was introduced into Central Europe by the Jesuits before the end of the sixteenth century. It was only after the Thirty Years War (1618-1648), however, that building activity gained full momentum, and the main works of Central European Baroque stem from the eighteenth century. Travelling Italian architects and craftsmen played an important role at the outset, and the names of Lurago, Caratti, Carlone, Martinelli, Zucalli, Alliprandi, Broggio and Santini have found their place in architectural history. Soon, however, local architects took over, such as the Vorarlberg masters, who aimed at a synthesis of local and Italian traits. This aim was supported by the counter-reformatory movement, which wanted a locally rooted, generally understandable art. Thus, quite early, we find the introduction of medieval motifs and structures in the basically classical language of the Baroque, such as the *wall-pillar*, which is a late-Gothic kind of buttress placed inside the church.

Austria played a primary role in the development of Central European Baroque, due to the leading political position of the country after the defeat of the Turks near Vienna in 1683. Both of the main Italian currents were present; the Berninesque one found its spokesman in Johann Bernhard Fischer von Erlach (1656-1723), who is known as the creator of the grandiose Karlskirche in Vienna (1715-1737), where a synthesis of the eras of Solomon, Augustus, Christ and the Austrian emperor is expressed by means of historical quotations. This is a truly "theatrical" architecture, with a rich symbolic content. The Borrominian current was introduced by Fischer's rival, Johann Lucas von Hildebrandt (1668-1745), who in several churches made use of Guarini's method of grouping spaces. His main work, however, is the charming and picturesque Belvedere palace in Vienna (1714-1722), built for Prince Eugene of Savoy, the defeater of the Turks.

A more popular baroque architecture, mainly centering its attention on religious

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Photo © C. Norberg-Schulz, Oslo

Above, the interior of Dominikus Zimmermann's pilgrimage church (1744-1754) at Wies in Bavaria (Fed. Rep. of Germany), a triumph of Central European Baroque. High altar in the form of the "tree of life", right, was produced by Bartholomäus Steinle for the church of Stams monastery (Austria).

buildings, was developed in Bohemia by Christoph and Kilian Ignaz Dientzenhofer. Christoph (1655-1722) migrated to Prague from Bavaria in 1686, and in his new country achieved a highly ingenious synthesis of Guarini's spatial organisms and the Central European wall-pillar system. Owing to the skeletal character of the latter, Christoph's churches may be characterized as "open" compositions which in a particularly fascinating way express the dynamism and infinite quality of baroque art. Christoph's son Kilian Ignaz (1689-1751) further developed the ideas of his father, and in numerous works realized an *ars combinatoria* of interdependent spatial cells, thus bringing the intentions of Borromini and Guarini to their logical conclusion. One example of the art of the Dientzenhofers is the great church of St. Nicholas in the Little Quarter in Prague, initiated by Christoph in 1703 and completed by Kilian (1737-1753).

A third member of the Dientzenhofer family, Christoph's brother Johann (1673-1726), brought the principles of the Bohemian Baroque to Franconia, where we find one of the most accomplished works of the period, the monastic church of Banz (1710-1719). Johann Dientzenhofer also inspired a follower, who is generally considered the most important architect of the Central European Baroque: Johann Balthasar Neumann (1687-1753). The work of Neumann, who was equally active in ecclesiastical, secular and military architecture, is exceptionally rich and varied. His great churches of Vierzehnheiligen (1742ff.) and Neresheim (1747ff.) combine the "open" spatial groups of the Guarini-Dientzenhofer tradition with a central, dominant rotunda, indicating that around 1750 baroque dynamism started to give way to a more static, classical conception of space.

The same holds true of the works of two other important late baroque masters, Johann Michael Fischer (1691-1766) and Dominikus Zimmermann (1685-1766). In Zimmermann's pilgrimage church at Wies (1744-1754), the Central European Baroque is consummated in a *Gesamtkunstwerk* ("total art work") of rare beauty, which achieves an exuberant expression of rejoicing and fulfilment.

After the powerful manifestation of faith of the Central European Baroque, *Enlightenment* took over, and a new epoch in European history began, aiming at analytic understanding rather than synthetic truth.

Today, however, a keen interest in the Baroque is again being felt. Its "open" and dynamic forms have a basic affinity to modern art, and its emphasis on expression and "happening" rather than ideal order, is certainly related to some aspects of contemporary life. Although its aims and social background were different, we may therefore learn much from the Baroque, and the works of the Borromini school in particular have had a liberating effect on many present-day architects. ■

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Baroque in the Slav countries

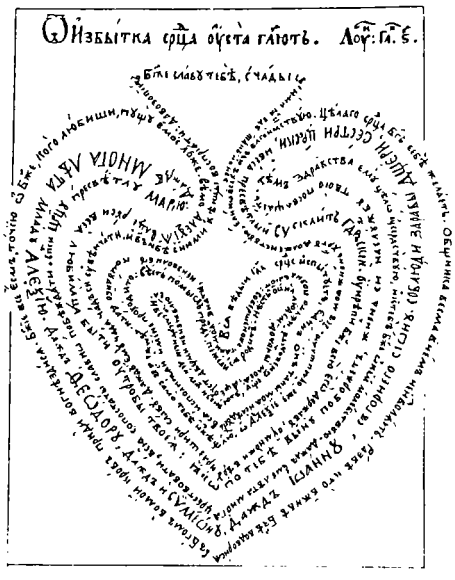
BY GEORGII D. GATCHEV

RUSSIA was no exception to the rule whereby the baroque style was transmitted from country to country by itinerant artists and craftsmen. Among the baroque artists who worked in Russia was the French sculptor Etienne Maurice Falconet, who executed the equestrian statue of Peter the Great in Leningrad, while the Italian architect Bartolomeo Francesco Rastrelli was the country's most brilliant exponent of baroque architecture. Il Gesù, the famous Jesuit church in Rome, was a source of inspiration for many churches in the Ukraine as well as in Latin America.

With its formal complexity and technical refinements, far removed from the spontaneity of Rousseauism or the Romantic taste for simplicity and naturalism, baroque art lent itself to this form of transmission. In the seventeenth century, mathematical discoveries crossed frontiers in the same way, just as they do today, in a kind of scientific and technological internationalism.

The characteristics of Slav Baroque are linked to the historical and cultural traditions of the different regions in which the Slavs had settled. The Baroque left a very strong imprint among the Catholic Slav peoples of Poland and Dalmatia, just as it did in Protestant, Germanic Bohemia. Its influence was less marked among people of the Orthodox faith in the Ukraine, Byelorussia and Russia, and was felt least of all by the Serbian and Bulgarian peoples under Ottoman domination.

In creative terms, the Slav contribution to European Baroque is more evident in literature than in the fine arts. In the sixteenth century the Polish poet Mikolaj Szarzynski (1550-1581) expressed the anguish of man's isolation in the world and the tragic need for spiritual choice imposed by the conflict between Reformation and Counter-Reformation.



Left, baroque inspiration can be seen in this calligram by the Russian poet Simon Polotzki (1629-1680). Entitled "The Eagle of Russia", the heart-shaped poem is dedicated to the Tsar Alexis on the occasion of his 30th birthday.

Photo taken from *Le baroque dans les civilisations slaves*, Moscow 1982 © Nauka Publishers

Osman, an epic work by the Croatian poet Ivan Gundulić (c. 1589-1638), presents a completely different vision of reality, evoking the cultural and religious confrontation between East and West through a wealth of images from the external world.

One aspect of baroque culture, common to the vast majority of the Polish nobility and known as "Sarmatianism", had echoes in Hungary, Romania, and in the Ukraine. Polish contacts through wars and trade with Turks, Crimean Tartars and Persians led to this rather unusual synthesis of eastern and western elements, which was expressed in interior decoration, costume, manners and the art of oratory. Court theatre was also influenced by the Baroque, notably the plays of Ursula Radziwill, who had married into the Polish royal family, which was of Lithuanian origin. In her "Tale of Prince Adolf", for example, borrowings from classical mythology and mannered French literature are transformed into a magnificent "primitive" art form.

Notable aspects of Byelorussian and Ukrainian painting are the unique seventeenth- and eighteenth-century funerary portraits on metal, and *parsuni* (a corruption of "person") art, inspired by icon painting. While the painters used some processes favoured by baroque artists (contrast of light and dark, effects of perspective), they refused to idealize their subjects: beauty spots, scars or deformities were meticulously painted, in an attempt to immortalize the flesh, which though doomed to decomposition concealed a soul bound for eternity. ■

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A baroque miscellany

Conceptions of the Baroque

According to one theory, the term *baroque* stems from the Portuguese word *barroco*, which is used to describe a rough or imperfectly shaped pearl. In the 18th century it was being used to denote (in architecture) "a paroxysm of the bizarre" or "the height of absurdity", and to describe music that was "laden with dissonance" (Jean-Jacques Rousseau). More generally it designated forms of artistic expression "in which the rules of proportion are not observed and everything is represented according to the artist's whim" (Pernety, *Dictionnaire portatif de peinture, sculpture et gravure*, Paris, 1757).

"Baroque architecture speaks the same language as the Renaissance, but in a barbaric dialect." (Jacob Burckhardt, *Il Cicerone*, 1860.)

"A noble art form with a rural base, produced by seigneurial landed societies, in contrast to classical art which is associated with the bourgeoisie." (V.-L. Tapié, *Baroque et classicisme*, 1957.)

"A palatine and urban art, springing from a Catholic and monarchical society which is both aristocratic and bourgeois." (G. Bazin, *Destins du baroque*, 1970.)

"The Baroque is a permanent element of sensibility which continually changes its appearances throughout the history of art." (E. d'Ors, *Lo barroco*, 1936.)

Words and expressions commonly associated with baroque art include: exuberance, extravagance, exaggerated forms, rejection of straight lines, contorted forms, gesticulation, declamation, free forms, "forms that fly" (E. d'Ors), exploding space, disequilibrium, asymmetry, diagonal dynamism, effects of depth, evanescence, illusionism, *trompe-l'œil*, art of movement, art of excess.

Further reading

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- *Italian Baroque and Rococo Architecture*, by J. Varriano. Oxford University Press, U.K., 1986.
- *The World Atlas of Architecture*, G.K. Hall & Co., Boston, Massachusetts, U.S.A., 1984.

Some baroque masterpieces

Façades: S. Carlo alle Quattro Fontane, Rome, by Borromini, and the Palazzo Carignano, Turin, by Guarini.
Sculpture: *The Ecstasy of St. Theresa*, Sta. Maria della Vittoria, Rome, by Bernini; *The Way of the Cross* series by Aleijadinho at the sanctuary of Bom Jesus de Matozinhos, Congonhas do Campo, Brazil.
Decoration: *El transparente* by Narciso Tomé (Toledo cathedral, Spain) and the façade of San Francisco Acatépec, Mexico; church interiors: the church of St. John Nepomuk, Munich, and the church of São Domingo, Salvador, Brazil; *Assumption of the Virgin*, by E.Q. Asam, Rohr monastery, Fed. Rep. of Germany (decorative carving); ceiling of the church of Santa María Tonantzintla, Mexico.
Palaces and castles: Nymphenburg and Würzburg (Bavaria, Fed. Rep. of Germany); Stupinigi (Piedmont, Italy).
Painting: ceiling fresco, Palazzo Barberini, Rome, by Pietro da Cortona; vault of Il Gesù, also in Rome, by Gaulli.
"Ephemeral" architecture: triumphal arch of the Carrefour de la Fontaine Saint-Gervais, Paris, erected to mark the arrival of Marie Thérèse of Austria, queen consort of Louis XIV of France, 26 August 1660. Depictions of this and many other "ephemeral" baroque works of art constructed of non-durable materials can be found in contemporary engravings.